NYPL RESEARCH LIBRARIES
3 3433 08182080 9

WHEN THE WILDWOOD WAS IN FLOWER

G · SMITH · STANTON

NOV 8 1912
MAY 2 4 1915

SEP 15 '16

NOV 1 8 1916
FEB 15 '17

Presented to the
168th & Woodycrest
Avenue Branch of the
New York Library
with the compliments
of the author.
New York, May 12th 1910

"When the Wildwood Was in Flower."

A NARRATIVE

COVERING THE FIFTEEN YEARS' EXPERIENCES OF A NEW YORKER ON THE WESTERN PLAINS.

BY

G. SMITH STANTON,

Author of "Where the Sportsman Loves to Linger," et al.

NEW YORK:
J. S. OGILVIE PUBLISHING COMPANY,
57 ROSE STREET.

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY
393[illegible]1
ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS.
R 1910 L

Copyright, 1910, by
G. SMITH STANTON

Checked
May 1913

To those men and women who endured the hardships and braved the dangers of the frontier that their descendants might enjoy the comforts and benefits of civilization, this volume is dedicated.

Transfer from Circ. Dept. AUG 26 1910

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2008 with funding from
Microsoft Corporation

http://www.archive.org/details/whenwildwoodwasi00stan

PREFACE.

THE object of this little volume is two-fold. First, the author was one of the pioneers of the great West, and he thought his reminiscences would be of some value from a historical standpoint, and, secondly, the recounting of his experience with one of the gigantic trusts might help to arouse public opinion to the necessity of crushing those great combinations ere they become the absolute dictators of our government.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

PAGE

New York to "the End of the Line"..... 11

CHAPTER II.

Following the Trail..... 19

CHAPTER III.

Life on the Frontier..... 28

CHAPTER IV.

Reminders of By-gone Days..... 37

CHAPTER V.

Winter on the Prairie..... 51

CHAPTER VI.

Running a Stock Ranch..... 61

CHAPTER VII.

Shipping Stock to Chicago..... 74

CHAPTER VIII.

Atmospheric Disturbances..... 86

CHAPTER IX.

PAGE

Up Against the Red Man..... 94

CHAPTER X.

The Plains and the Rockies..... 103

CHAPTER XI.

The Passing of the Stockman..... 117

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

	PAGE
West Point	12
Where Fort Dearborn Once Stood	13
On the Grade	17
The Alkali Overland Coach	19
"Hands Up!"	22
The Valley of the Boyer, Woodbine	23
This is "By"	29
A Prairie Wolf	31
The Valley of the Pigeon—"Stanton's Ranch"	34
"Joe" Smith	42
Where the Burglars Tried to Work Pusey and His Combination	44
Braden in His Younger Days	48
When the Wildwood Was in Flower	49
The Author, When Mayor of Woodbine, Iowa	52
The Author's Residence, Great Neck, Long Island, N. Y.	54
First Touch of Winter on the Northwestern	57
Would I Were on the Plains Again	60
A Self-binder	62
The Beef Trust Will Get the Profit	64
The Author	71
"Johnny" Wells	76
Moingona Bridge, Scene of Kate Shelly's Heroic Act	79
The Home of the Stockman and His Herd	82
The Mother Watching the Branding of Its Offspring	85
The Author's Wife and Her Indian Pony	88

PAGE
"Texas," Our Mainstay..... 91
Little Wolf's Double..... 95
The Original American..... 98
Dinner Is Now Ready in the Dining Car..... 101
Omaha..... 104
Denver and the Ever Snow-capped Rockies..... 111
Fryer's Hill in the Long Ago..... 113
The Little Pittsburg in the Good Old Days..... 115
My Last Bunch of Stock..... 119
Union Stock Yards, Chicago..... 121

When the Wildwood was in Flower

CHAPTER I.

NEW YORK TO "THE END OF THE LINE."

BACK in the early sixties, as the announcer of the arrival and departure of trains at the old Thirtieth Street Depot, New York City, over the Hudson River Railroad, was calling "Chicago express now ready," the author of this little volume, grip in hand, was about to follow the admonition of the greatest editor the New York *Tribune* ever had—"Go West, young man!" This particular young man had recently graduated from the Columbia College Law School, and on account of his health had decided to start a stock ranch on a large tract of land in western Iowa left to him in the will of his grandfather, Judge Daniel Cady. Think of the transformation from a law office in Nassau Street to an isolated stock ranch on the Missouri River! While the train was passing West Point we were performing the disrobing act prior to our taking advantage of the inventive genius of one Mr. Wagner. For eight hours of refreshing sleep we returned thanks to mine host Wagner. As we passed through the metropolis of the West, situated on the western shore of Lake Michigan in that one-time

bog-hole where Fort Dearborn once stood, little did I know what an important part in my future the Union stock-yards of that great city were to play.

West Point.

Upon my arrival at Chicago I got my first glimpse of the breezy West. How different was the metropolis of the West at that time from that of the East! How different the citizenship of State Street from that of Broadway! Men predominated on State Street. Instead of the fashionably dressed lady of Fifth Avenue, you met her Western sister plainly garbed. How great the contrast between the men of the "wild and woolly West" and those of the East! The slouch hat instead of the English tile. Ill-fitting clothes and an unkempt appearance instead of the well groomed. The citizens of the great and mighty West beyond mingled with the throng. Mountaineers

from the Rockies, cowboys from the plains, stockmen from the grazing country and wheat kings from the Dakotas rubbed shoulders as they bustled along the thoroughfares of the great city by the lake, the supply depot for the vast country to the West, the recipient of the products of the States between the lakes and the Great Divide, the

Where Fort Dearborn Once Stood.

greatest railroad center in America and the receiver of more grain and stock than any city of our Union. Fortunate for me it was that at the Sherman House—at that time the leading hostelry of Chicago—I met a gentleman whose acquaintance I formed in New York, Mr. Dalrymple, the wheat king of the world. With him I visited the great elevators through which the grain raised over

the prairie States passed into vessels and in them over the lakes and across the sea. We also visited the packing houses from which the world drew its supplies.

I thought I had seen at Castle Garden in New York a motley crowd of immigrants, but the sight I beheld at the depot of the Northwestern Railroad capped anything I ever saw at the Battery, and the worst of it was that the immigrant cars were being hitched onto the train I was taking, and for some unaccountable reason they were coupled on between the sleeper and the regular passenger coaches. What a mixture of humanity was on that train. The regular day coaches were occupied solely by men, the majority of them recruits from New York City and Chicago, for some special work in the West. The effluvia from the immigrant cars so permeated the sleeper that I spent most of the time in the day coaches. In my young days I circulated along the Bowery and thought I had seen a tough element, but the boys who occupied the smoker and day coaches of that train had the Bowery left at the post. Every one of them had anywhere from a pint to a quart of whiskey and were playing cards, swearing and fighting the length of the cars. It was a choice between the American citizen in the front cars and the effluvia of the newly arrived in the immigrant portion. I wondered what those immigrants thought of the natives of the country of which they were about to become citizens.

After leaving Chicago as we crossed the level prairies of the State of Illinois I recalled the great debate of those two sons of the Sucker State, Lincoln and Douglas. What an example the greatest President since Washington set of honesty both in and out of politics. Has the greed for the almighty dollar so warped us all that we care not to emulate his noble example? If Lincoln were alive to-day does

any one doubt where he would stand in the contest being waged between the rights of the individual and the wrongs of the combination? How long is the great and mighty West to be dominated by Wall Street? But the awakening will come, and by the people and through the people. Though legislative halls and courts fail, still it will come. I saw an uprising once, but God forbid that I ever witness another. I refer to what was known as the July riots of 1863 in New York City. For three days the great City of New York was at the mercy of the mob. The police dared not leave their precincts, the militia kept to their armories, everybody was cowed, there was no government. I was a deputy for a time, sworn in to protect Mayor Opdyke in his palatial residence on Fifth Avenue. I there saw how helpless was government when the mob arose. During one of those awful days I was the custodian of Horace Greeley at the home of my uncle, Dr. Bayard, at 6 West Fourteenth Street. Mr. Greeley was taken away from his own home to save his life from an infuriated mob. Notwithstanding that Mr. Greeley was always a defender of the right, yet they sought his life. From that circumstance I learned that no prominent person is safe when revolution breaks forth.

What is now known as the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad was the first railway across Iowa, and it had rails laid at that time to the town of Montana, now Boone, about 200 miles west of the Mississippi River. Notwithstanding it is over forty years since I first saw that frontier town, still I can see it to-day as vividly as when I stepped from the train just as the sun was showing its head over the prairies of the Hawkeye State. Daily stages started for the West, but I thought I would tarry a day or two and look around. When I was attending Columbia College Law School in Lafayette Place, New

York City, we were living on West Forty-fifth Street. I always walked to and from the school. My course lay down Fifth Avenue to Broadway, and down Broadway to Astor Place. There was nothing about Boone that reminded me of Fifth Avenue or Broadway.

Imagine about two hundred one-story, detached, frame buildings, about every other one a saloon, gambling-house or dance-hall, strung along a street—simply a stretch of prairie about 60 feet in width—with not a tree in sight, crowded with a sample of every brand of citizen from border to border, and you can pretty nearly size up a town at "the end of the line." The buildings were thrown together, as it was only a question of thirty days before they would be again moved to "the end of the line." There was plenty of music and whiskey. Occasional fights added to the excitement. Tall, black-mustached, rough-looking men, with wide sombreros, their pants in their boots, armed cap-a-pie, jostled their way through the street looking for trouble and generally finding it. Young officers from the government forts, dressed in the uniform of the United States army, were sipping wine with straw-haired girls. Indians decked out with feathers, moccasins and a blanket, were on the still hunt for firewater to drink and dogs to eat. One of the Indians, more successful than the others, got too much firewater. He had shed his blanket, and, in the garb of Adam, with the exception of feathers on his head and moccasins on his feet, with a war-whoop, knife in hand, undertook to carve a way up the street. Above the heads of the retreating crowd circled a lariat, and as it settled over the red man's shoulders it tightened, and Mr. Indian bounced behind a cowboy's pony to the cooler.

Leaning against the bars were young men from the East, each a mother's hope and pride, who had left their

happy homes to seek their fortunes in the new Eldorado. The men behind the bar, those in front of it, and the fellow waiting to be asked, were trying to express their views at one and the same time. Capitalists from New York and England, with mining engineers, were on their way to

On the Grade.

the Rockies. Unhaltered mules wandered around the town, and every now and then some vicious cuss with his ears back would kick a swath down the thoroughfare. Lumbering oxen were slowly moving through the street yoked to wagons marked "U. S.," loaded with grain and provisions for the forts and reservations. Long lines of mule teams were constantly going down the grade carting scrapers, grain and grub.

It is astonishing the profanity it requires to build a railroad. If profanity were of intrinsic value and could be put in cold storage, I heard enough of it the two days I passed in Boone to pay the dividends on the stock of the Northwestern for generations to come. Prairie schooners loaded with the families and household effects of sons of toil from Indiana and Illinois were winding their way through the outskirts of the town to accept Uncle Sam's hospitality and settle on the plains to the westward. Herds of grass-fed cattle, smooth and fat, were arriving from the luscious grasses of the Missouri River plateau to be shipped to the Eastern markets, and paid-off cowboys would ride on bucking ponies through the dance-houses shooting daylight through the roofs. All night long ties and rails were being unloaded from gondola and box cars. There was one great satisfaction in it all, everybody was an American, and English the only language heard. The immigrant from the other side had not yet driven the American from the labor market. The sense of fair play pervaded the community, and there was a body of citizens always standing around who took particular pains to see that everybody, no matter who or what he was, got a square deal.

CHAPTER II.

FOLLOWING THE TRAIL.

THE second morning after my arrival I took the stage for the West. The outfit was similar to the now historic Deadwood Coach. With seven passengers besides myself,

The Alkali Overland Coach.

it started down the road for the bridge over the Des Moines River, and the limitless prairies beyond. Sitting bolt upright for thirty-six hours, with only short intervals to

stretch your legs and supply the inner man, was quite a change from the lower berth of a Pullman and "dinner is now ready in the dining-car." Think of the forty-niners; they had sixteen days and nights of it! They deserved the gold they got. Following one of the old stage routes across the plains would have been a bonanza for the "old hats" man of the city, as the road was strewn with hats jostled off from dozing passengers. Frequently passing us, both day and night, were horsemen going like the wind, whom I learned were special government and express messengers. During the night a feeling of lonesomeness came over me. At every turn of the wheels I felt myself going farther and farther from the Bowery. It seemed as if I were cutting loose from everything. I commenced for the first time to realize the situation, and was fast getting a case of "cold feet."

Think of leaving behind the gay Fashion Course and Hiram Woodruff, as we often saw him, holding the ribbons over some fast trotter! What a delight after the day's work was done to stroll down Broadway to Niblo's Garden, and after the show to drop into John Morrissey's for a midnight lunch, and to play the ace to win. What a pleasure it was to look across the footlights at old John Gilbert and Lester Wallack, or to feel your blood tingle as Edwin Booth in Hamlet would repeat the lines "Do you see nothing there?" What! never to see Dan Bryant and Dave Reed dance "Shoefly" again? The idea! What a recreation it was to go over to the Elysian Fields in Hoboken in the afternoon and see the Mutuals play the great American game, and in the evening see old Mike Phelan and Dudley Kavanaugh toy with the ivories! We often passed the time of day with Commodore Vanderbilt while driving through Central Park. How that gifted speaker, James T.

Brady, during the war, used to enthuse our patriotism! What a treat it was to drop into some forum and hear the learned Charles O'Conor lay down the law. Often have we gone to the large hall of Cooper Institute and listened to that graceful elocutionist, Wendell Phillips, deliver one of his famous lectures, and on Sunday morning to Brooklyn and heard Brother Beecher tell us what we had to do to reach the promised land, and in the afternoon to Coney Island, to eat clams on the half shell at the old Pavilion, see the three-card monte men fleece the unsophisticated, and try to wash our sins away among the great combers of the deep.

I was leaving all this, and more, and what for? My health. Can health come to the body with the mind in gloom? Why couldn't we all have health all the time? God help the one who has the money and the health question to contend with at the same time. One is always being neglected for the other, and, under the pressure of the combination, frail humanity soon gives way.

What a sweep there is to the imagination and what timidity comes with the stilly night! I felt as if I wanted to jump from the stage and bolt back to Boone, and very likely would if I hadn't suddenly been brought to my senses by a sharp command—"Halt, throw up your hands!" two shots almost simultaneously, a crack of the whip, and the sudden lunge of the stage forward. I soon learned that a lone bandit had attempted to hold us up, and had been shot by the Wells-Fargo express messenger who sat beside the driver. I was satisfied to sit still. Instead of meditating, I was congratulating myself that I was alive and my money safe. It is an old but true saying that we never know when we

are well off. That little episode dispelled the gloom, and "Richard is himself again."

At dusk on the second day we had covered the one hundred miles between Boone and a little hamlet forty miles east of Council Bluffs, consisting of a store, a post-office, a tavern, two houses and a mill, known as Woodbine, my destination. Not very exhilarating surroundings to a youth fresh from Broadway. Little did I know that years after-

"Hands Up!"

ward a flourishing municipality by the same name would be built near by on the Northwestern Railroad, and I would have the honor of being its mayor.

The last twenty-five miles were down the far-famed valley of the Boyer River, afterward to prove to be one of the most productive valleys of one of the best agricultural States of the Union. It was a lovely spring day. In the early morn the soft, melodious crowing of the prairie chickens greeted us. The prairies were decked out in the flowers

of the wild, and as we bowled along it seemed as if Nature was doing all she could to make us welcome. Everything was quiet, peaceful and content. A few years ago I passed down the same valley. What a change in forty years! It was gashed by two railroads, and where the prairie flower once bloomed and the wild game flourished, and the Indian, the only contented individual who ever inhabited America,

The Valley of the Boyer, Woodbine.

roamed at will, were hard-working toilers trying to eke out an existence. Little hamlets were scattered here and there, with the daily life similar in all communities, containing more shadow than sunshine, and the question was forced upon me, would it not have been better if the transformation had never been made?

Twenty miles from Woodbine, in the isolated valley of the Pigeon River, I was to live for the next fifteen years. Near Woodbine on a stock ranch lived the man with whom

I had become acquainted through correspondence, the one whom I sought and who willingly assisted me in the enterprise in which I was about to embark. A man made after God's own image, no more upright, honorable human being was ever born than the one whom I was afterward to be associated with in the great cattle industry of the plains, Byron C. Adams, better known all over the West and to every shipper of live stock to Chicago as "By" Adams, and I hope there is a hereafter, that I may meet my dear friend again.

Upon my arrival at Woodbine, I learnt that my friend "By" Adams had gone to Shelby County, to bring back with him one Bill Cuppy who had been drafted, and would not return for a couple of days. "By" was a deputy provost marshal during the war, his duties consisting of rounding up the drafted men. And thereby hangs a tale.

From a map of Iowa I purchased in Chicago, and from my experiences thereafter, I found that the word "exaggeration" was in the Iowa lexicon. I expected to find creeks called rivers, ponds lakes, but I did not expect to find a "city" a house and a barn. According to the map, "Jeddo City" was about two hours' drive away, and I decided that the two days "By" was after Cuppy I would spend in the gay resorts of Jeddo City. The tavern-keeper supplied a driver and the necessary rig, and the next morning after my arrival, over the prairies we went to Jeddo City. How gay and happy I felt as we trotted along for Jeddo! How I longed for a taste of city life again! I could see myself entering one of the leading hotels of the city and writing my "John Hancock" on its register and taking the elevator for my room. I did not expect to find a New York, but certainly "Jeddo City" would have similar earmarks. I could see myself strolling along the main thoroughfare of

the city with the gay crowd by day, and at night admiring the chorus as they swung along the footlights. I could see myself in the crowded restaurants ordering the choice of the ménu. In fact, I was picturing to myself a counterpart of the big city on the Hudson.

There was one thing about the driver that I could not quite fathom. Every time I asked him anything about Jeddo City, he would look at me and smile. I attributed the smile to a reminder of some of his experiences in the great city of Jeddo. It was ten miles from Woodbine to Jeddo City. After we had traveled what I thought was the ten miles, I inquired of the driver how much further it was to Jeddo. Instead of a smile, he said two miles. At every rise of the road thereafter I expected to see the spires and hear the roar of the town. At times I thought I could detect the chimes of cathedral bells. I commenced to get so excited with the pleasant anticipation that I felt like jumping from the buggy and taking it on the run.

As I began to think those two miles were the longest I ever experienced the driver brought his horse to a stop in front of a house which had for its companion a solitary barn. I asked him what he stopped for. He replied: "This is Jeddo City." I used to "buck the tiger" at the resorts along Broadway and there learned the art of being a good loser. That acquirement stood me in good stead. In a moment I smothered my surprise and disappointment and tried to play my part. I got out of the buggy, telling the driver to wait a moment, and started for the house. I saw "Post Office" on a board on the side of the house. I took the cue and inquired if there was any mail for me, and returned to the buggy, telling the driver that the man that I wanted to see had died the night before and we would return to Woodbine.

If I had kept my mouth shut regarding my trip to Jeddo, nobody would have been any the wiser, but I told my friend Adams of the object of my visit to Jeddo, and "By," ever after, used my Jeddo City experience as one of his stock stories, and the boys had many a "drive" at me. But when Bill Cuppy came back from Missouri, he told me the story of when "By" went to Shelby County to gather him in, and whenever "By" would forget himself, and start that Jeddo City story, all I had to say was "Bill Cuppy," and "By" would change the subject.

Before Adams started for Cuppy, friends told "By" he would never bring Cuppy back, and that he should be mighty careful not to let Cuppy get the drop on him, for Bill was a bad man. The story Bill told me was as follows: He knew he had been drafted and was expecting "By" any day. It was in the fall of the year and Cuppy had a corn field he was trying to husk out and expected to take a little trip thereafter, and was hoping that "By" would not show up until the work was done and he had gotten away. One afternoon while Cuppy was working might and main ripping husks and throwing corn against the extra sideboard, he saw the smiling countenance of the deputy provost marshal coming down between two rows of corn. The two men were acquainted, so the greeting was mutual.

Cuppy explained the situation to "By," stating that he was perfectly willing to go back with him, but he was awfully anxious to get that field of corn in the crib, and that it would take only another day's work. From what they told "By" about Cuppy, the deputy provost marshal concluded that was an easy way out of it. For company's sake and to help matters along, "By," who was a good corn husker, took one row and Cuppy another. The next morning "By" was up bright and early ready to finish the job and

start with his prisoner for Council Bluffs. The afternoon was nearly gone as the last ear of corn was shoveled into the crib. "By" agreed with a suggestion of Cuppy's, that they had better not start over the dreary waste between the Nishnabotna and Boyer rivers at that time of day. "By" and Cuppy played cards until about midnight. As "By" came down to breakfast the next morning, instead of meeting Cuppy, he found the following note at his plate:

"'By'—When we meet again, I shall insist on paying you for helping me husk out that field of corn. In haste,

"BILL."

It seems that while the deputy provost marshal was sweetly snoring the night away, Cuppy was behind his best span of horses heading for Missouri to make an old friend a long visit.

"By's" story of the event didn't agree with Cuppy's, and I always thought that Cuppy's version of the circumstances of his arrest was told as a joke on the deputy provost marshal, as Bill Cuppy never ran away from anything, but there seemed to be enough in it to silence "By" when he opened up the Jeddo City story.

CHAPTER III.

LIFE ON THE FRONTIER.

THE spring, summer and fall were passed constructing the necessary buildings, getting together provender, and scouring with "By" the western part of the State for stock as a starter. The fellow who made the statement that horseback riding was the best outdoor exercise of all, hit the bull's-eye plumb in the center. The pale, sickly law student from 49 Nassau Street, commenced to put on color. "By" was constantly giving me pointers on the stock business. Gathering up steers here and there, and then trying to drive the bunch with every one of them wanting to bolt back home, keeps a fellow sliding on the saddle. For my health while in New York City I attended John Wood's gymnasium on Twenty-eighth Street, and rode horseback through Central Park; but trying to head a steer on the prairies of the West, for healthful exercise, takes the blue ribbon over all the gymnasiums and bridle paths in the universe.

I will never forget the day that "By" and I were driving a bunch of stock, and he called my attention to a particular steer who kept craning his neck and looking back. "By" told me that fellow would bolt before long, and when he did he would take after him and wind him, and I was to try and hold the rest of the herd. Shortly, with tail in

the air, the animal whirled and bolted back over the prairie and disappeared over a hill with "By" after him with his stock whip circling in the air. I had little difficulty hold-

This is "By."

ing the herd, as they were hungry and commenced feeding. I rode to the top of the nearest hill to get a view of the process of winding a steer. Every once in a while among the hills I would catch a sight of "By" and the

steer and could hear the stock whip as it snapped pieces of hide from the animal's back. In about half an hour I saw the animal coming back with "By" riding leisurely in the rear. The animal's tongue was hanging out about a foot. As we started the herd along, "By's" friend took the lead, and seemed willing to admit that the man on horseback is a dangerous proposition.

One of the first acquaintances I formed in the West, of the animal kingdom, was the prairie wolf or coyote. The wolf has a few ideas worth taking note of. His den is a hole in the ground, but dug in such a way that neither the elements nor his enemies can get at him. He usually selects a side hill and digs a hole down about eight feet at an angle of forty-five degrees and then goes up about two feet and excavates the den. Here the little wolves are born, but there is no "little window where the sun comes peeping in at morn." When the rain comes it runs down the incline and at the bottom soaks away, but the den is high and dry, showing the wolf had a great head. If anything crawled down the hole, when it struck the angle the wolf would be above it, and it is generally the case in this world that the fellow who is on top when the row begins has the advantage, and the wolf family seem to be aware of that fact and build their habitations accordingly.

My dog Texas and the wolves were great friends. Often about daybreak we would see the dog playing with the wolves along the Pigeon. One old wolf, in particular, and Texas seemed to be the best of friends; the wolf would chase the dog down the river bottom, and then "Old Tex," in turn, would chase the wolf, and then they would rear up and clinch. Thus would the wild and the tame meet on the level and act on the square. All "nature fakirs"

agree that animals of similar species communicate with each other. I often wondered, as I saw "Tex" and the wolf momentarily resting from the fatigue of the play, with their noses together, what they were saying. That is beyond the

A Prairie Wolf.

imagination to fathom, and what would I not have given to have had my curiosity satisfied!

The saying "keep the wolf from the door" does not refer to the prairie species, for if there was ever a coward it is the prairie wolf. He never had sand enough to go

near anybody's house, let alone the door, so if the bank account of any reader of this little volume is nearing the zero mark and he sees a wolf heave in sight, he need not worry if it is of the prairie species.

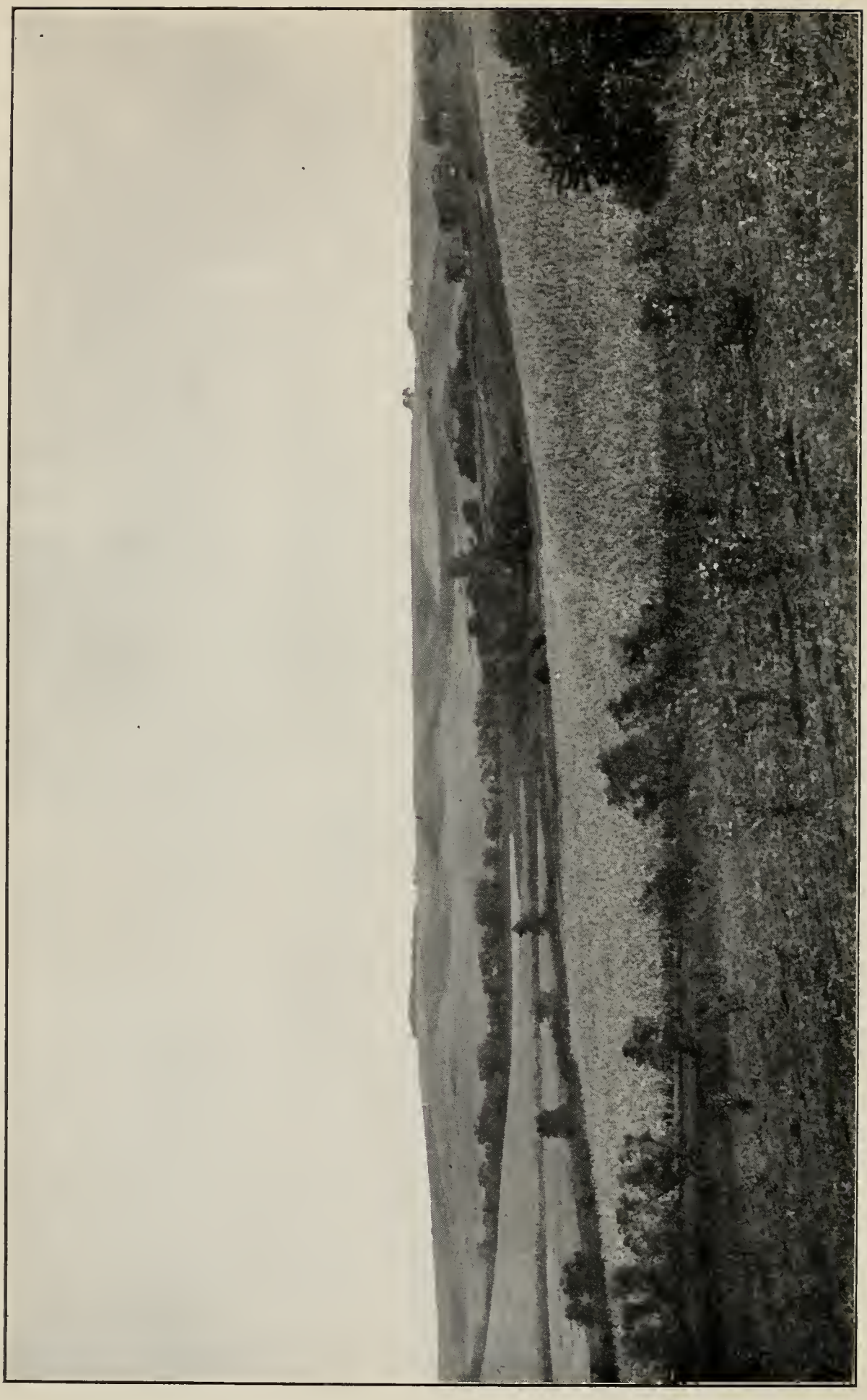
Every animal has a means of defense, and the Supreme Being when he made a prairie wolf knew he was making a quitter, so he gave him the most unearthly yell of all the four-footed animals. If you didn't know there was a coward back of that yell you might feel a little nervous. Shakespeare must have had the prairie wolf in view when he coined the phrase, "Sound and fury signify nothing." If any college could get on to that yell, the others would certainly throw up the sponge. The prairie wolves generally travel in pairs. They have the habit at night of sitting on different hills and yelling wireless messages to each other, and, as the unearthly noise echoes and re-echoes among the hills, it is anything but a pleasant lullaby. The only time they show any grit is when they are in a pack and half famished. I never knew of their killing a human being, but I don't know what might have happened to a mail-carrier on one occasion if some of my men and I had not dropped around at an opportune time.

Before the days of the railroads the mail was carried across Iowa by relays. A relay was from one county seat to that of an adjoining one. The mail route between Harlan in Shelby County and Magnolia in Harrison County, a distance of fifty miles, passed through my land. I was a little out of the direct line, but on account of a shallow ford across the Pigeon River, which ran through my place, the mail route made a slight detour. My place was about half way between Harlan and Magnolia, and the mail-carriers generally stopped with me for dinner, and I was glad they did, as they brought "the latest news

from the front." The mail-carrier's outfit consisted of a horse and a buckboard. They generally carried a half dozen pouches. Everybody in those days went armed, as bands of Indians occasionally circled around, and horse and cattle thieves were on the lookout to catch you napping. Colt's revolvers were the means of defense.

One day when the carrier was due from the East, I was out with some of the boys in search of a couple of two-year-olds we hadn't seen with the herd for several days. We were leisurely loping along when off to the east on a divide about a mile away we saw the mail-carrier with his horse on the jump followed by a pack of wolves. We saw him throw something overboard, which stopped the pack for a minute or two. It was a mail bag. We started in full gallop for the ford, and as we came up the bank we saw the mail-carrier coming at breakneck speed down a long hollow leading to the ford, with the pack at his heels. It was lucky for him that his horse had good wind and was sure-footed, or it might have been a case for the coroner, although I believe if the fellow had stood his ground he might have scared them off. Where he made a mistake was that all he carried as a means of defense was an old horse-pistol. We fired our revolvers as we rode up the hollow, hoping to attract the attention of the wolves, which it seemed we did, for they slackened their pace and as we came up they slunk away.

The horse was all foam and the carrier as white as a sheet. I helped him to the ranch, sending the boys back on the trail to gather up the scattered mail. That night the carrier told us he wouldn't cross that prairie again for the proceeds of all the star routes in the State. And, sure enough, that was his last trip. I didn't blame him, as it was a lonely twenty-five miles, without a habitation. He



The Valley of the Pigeon—"Stanton's Ranch."

must have told the man who took his job of his experience, for when the new mail-carrier arrived his outfit looked like a battleship. He had guns and ammunition enough to kill all the wolves in the State.

The fellow the wolves took after, told us the only thing that saved his life was that about a mile back from where we saw him he shot one of the wolves and the pack stopped to eat it up. It does seem that the saying "dog eat dog" is ever being enacted. One would think that kind would protect kind, but it is not always so with wild animals, or domestic, for that matter. Take even the poultry yard. Any breeder of poultry knows that if one of the birds gets sick or injured, the others pounce upon him. How carefully the cow moose has to secrete the new-born from the murderous bull. The peacock who struts as the beautiful personified not only breaks up the nest and destroys the eggs but kills the little ones. Humanity for the moment stands aghast at such horrors, but how about this same humanity? Does the husband always rejoice at the embryo and welcome the helpless one as it starts on the journey of life? How does the society lady treat her fallen sister? What do the men do to their former business associate as he starts down the toboggan? Yet we pose as teachers of the heathen!

Every good story having a Western brand was during the war repeated by the friends and enemies of President Lincoln as "Old Abe's last." One of the stories appropriated as one of Abe's actually originated in the court house at Harlan, Shelby county, Iowa, and a lawyer by the name of Joe Smith was the originator. As already stated, my place on the Pigeon was about half way between the county seats of Shelby and Harrison Counties. I often entertained the court and bar as they passed from one county

seat to the other. They were a witty and bright lot of fellows, but poor in purse. Their clothes had seen long service and represented all the styles before the war. Joe was a great wit, and, unfortunately, always broke. Once while attending court at Harlan and while waiting for his own case to be called, he got quite interested in the case which was being tried. The seat of the trousers of one of the attorneys who was trying the case was worn through, and as he wore a sack coat and while addressing the jury would lean forward, one could see through the hole in the trousers the white shirt within. A philanthropic brother attorney had drawn up a subscription paper and passed it around among the lawyers for signature, the purport of which was to buy the brother attorney a new pair of trousers. Seventy-five cents in those days would have accomplished the mission. When it came Smith's turn to sign, he, being broke as usual, wrote the following endorsement on the subscription paper: "On account of my financial condition I am unable to contribute anything toward the object in view."

CHAPTER IV

REMINDERS OF BY-GONE DAYS

THE government surveyors laid out the prairie States like a checker board. One could have a good game of checkers on a map of the State of Iowa. Each square was six miles each way and contained thirty-six sections of land, and numbered from one to thirty-six, with six hundred and forty acres to a section. The squares running North and South were called townships, and those running East and West were called ranges, both being numbered. Consequently, there was little difficulty locating a section of land. That is, the engineers, in laying it out, thought there would be none. The corner of each section and half section of land was marked by a surveyor's stake driven into the ground with the number of the section cut thereon. Before driving the stake, a mound was thrown up and a stake driven into the center of it, and to distinguish a half section from a section corner, excavations were made either to the east or south of the mound as the case might be. The surveyors overlooked the fact that prairie fires would burn off the stakes. They also forgot the existence of a little animal who passed under the name of a "prairie gopher." The prairie gopher would throw up mounds galore similar to those of the surveyors. The result was, with the wooden stakes burnt off and mounds everywhere, hunting for a

section or half section corner in that bare uninhabited region was like hunting for the proverbial needle in the haystack. There was only one way out of the difficulty, and that was to find some established corner somewhere as a starter. It was the custom to go to the nearest settlement and commence operations from a known corner. Often the stakes were entirely rotted and the mounds washed away and the pits filled. Under these conditions, corners had to be established. Copies of the minutes of the government survey, made years before, were in the hands of the county surveyor, and with patience and lots of stalking, the desired corner was finally located.

The surveyors as they laid out many of the Western States were not aware that they were creating a timepiece for the settler ever after. The sections were laid off according to the compass and as the Sun crossed the section lines running North and South the settler gauged the noonday hour. Many farmers were too poor to own a watch and were thus able to tell the time of day with the section lines as a basis to work from. The width of the average human hand covers a passing hour. Extended about eighteen inches in front of the face and towards the Sun the space it occupies takes the golden orb an hour to pass. With the edge of the width of the human hand resting on a North and South section line, the number of widths until it cuts the Sun indicates the time of day. With the edge of the width of the hand resting on the horizon, the number of hours high of the Sun is easily ascertained. The old settler having been accustomed to judge the time of day by the Sun, a glance was all that was necessary. It was not an uncommon sight in the towns to see a farmer as he would do his trading give an occasional glance at this timepiece, which never ran down, nor lost, nor gained. The

saying, "Necessity is the mother of invention," was likely coined on some isolated plain. The coming of the railroad also furnished the settler with a barometer. Whenever from my ranch we could hear the rumbling of the freight trains on the Northwestern, it was a sure indication of rain; when we could not hear them it was a safe bet for fair weather. While the weather prognosticator was right half the time, the old Northwestern never slipped a cog.

What changed conditions I saw in the early settlers' means of transportation. What a transformation from the ox team and the solid wooden wheel to a span of horses and the spoked wheel wagon. What a difference walking alongside of a yoke of lumbering oxen with "Whoa! haw! Buck!" to sitting in a wagon guiding a free action team of horses with a pair of lines. The springless lumber wagon with a board for a seat was great for indigestion. The spring seat for the lumber wagon was the first harbinger of comfort for the early settler. The lucky farmer who had a spring seat for his wagon was the envy of the neighborhood. I will never forget the day that a man from Racine, Wisconsin, drove through the neighborhood with a top buggy soliciting purchasers. Young blood asserted itself and the lumber wagon with its spring seat was no longer "the head of the class." Top buggies began to make their appearance, and in turn the automobile has superseded the top buggy, and ere many years the aeroplane will be one of the necessary auxiliaries of a Western farmer's paraphernalia.

The Schutler wagon was one of the first and best that ever "clucked" over the Western prairies. Its manufacturer was Peter Schutler of Chicago. It surpassed all other wagons in durability and strength. The reason for this was that nothing but perfectly seasoned timber entered into its

construction. The Schutler plant occupied the whole of one of Chicago's blocks. Shed after shed contained lumber stored until well seasoned. An employee knew that if he was found using defective or unseasoned lumber, instant discharge followed. How different to-day; a standing tree Monday morning, Saturday night a door, the following week a carpenter to plug the cracks.

In the early settlement of the West, especially at the time of the country being railroaded, in many of the counties there arose the county seat question. The railroads left many of the old county seats miles away from the track. It seemed to be the universal opinion that a county seat should be located on the railroad. Immediately there began a fight among the towns along the railroads as to which one should be the shire-town. In some of the counties the railroad traversed its whole width or length, and several railroad towns were established thereon. Harrison County, Iowa, had its trouble with the rest. The Northwestern Railroad traveled the whole length of the county near its center and had four railroad towns. The old county seat, Magnolia, was left six miles from the railroad, so the verdict was unanimous that the county seat should be relocated. On account of the rivalry between the railroad towns, Magnolia remained the county seat long after the railroad was constructed. The county seat question overtopped all others at issue. Even politics had to take a back seat. We often hear the expression "fought like cats and dogs," but a cat and dog fight was a dead calm compared to the fights in old Harrison over the county seat question. It was fought out in churches, stores and bar-rooms, over the prairie and through the timber, up hill and down, afoot and on horse-back. Children, stock and crops were neglected, merchants fought with their cus-

tomers and ministers lost control of their flocks. Fathers neglected to perform their marital duties, consequently the population failed to increase, and those children who were born were of a quarrelsome disposition. In fact, the question was demoralizing the county over.

Every year a vote was taken without a majority for any town. Everybody commenced to realize that a state of anarchy would prevail, martial law be proclaimed and the militia called out if the question remained open. It was finally agreed that there should be a vote cast for the two towns that heretofore had received the most votes, and whichever one was beaten at the poles, peace would prevail. The election took place, but the vote was so close that both sides alleged fraud, and claimed the election. The dispute was carried to the courts for final adjudication. A lawyer by the name of Joe Smith represented one of the towns. The town Smith appeared for was beaten, and as is generally the case, Smith's client was dissatisfied, and its inhabitants jumped onto poor Joe. He was openly charged with selling out and branded a Benedict Arnold. They nicknamed Logan, the successful town, "Smithville." After the excitement had subsided it was proven and admitted on all sides that Smith acted on the square. One of the most amusing episodes in connection with Smith and the county seat question occurred with a minister by the name of Burgess, who occasionally preached throughout the county. He evidently had never met Smith but knew all about the county seat fight. Joe had the reputation of being the best all around joker in the county, and never lost a chance even if on himself. Smith knew Burgess by sight. One awful hot day Smith was riding horseback from Magnolia to Logan. When about half way he caught up to Brother Burgess plodding along afoot. As

Smith came up to Burgess he saw that the gentleman of the cloth looked tired, hot and dusty, and getting off his horse, offered it more as a joke than anything else to the minister to ride. Brother Burgess accepted Joe's invitation and mounted the nag. Joe told Burgess he was an

"Joe" Smith.

entire stranger and inquired how far it was to Smithville. The innocent preacher told Joe there was no such place as Smithville, that the town he wanted to go to was Logan. Joe feigned surprise and informed the minister that a short way back a man told him the town was Smithville. Bur-

gess told Joe that the name Smithville was simply a nickname they had for the town. Joe asked for an explanation, and he seemed to enjoy the story as the preacher recounted the charges against "a lawyer by the name of Joe Smith." Here was poor Joe walking along the hot dusty road and hearing himself denounced by the rider of his own horse. Burgess preached the next night in Logan and took for his text the seventh chapter of St. Matthew, 12th verse, and cited as an example his experience with Smith. The story was too good for Joe to keep, and poor Burgess was surprised and mortified when he learned who was the good Samaritan of the day before.

We have all heard of bold bank robberies, but the most daring I ever heard of occurred at the noon hour many years ago at the banking house of Officer & Pusey, in Council Bluffs, Iowa. Throughout the West at that time, about everybody closed up shop to enjoy the noonday meal. The banks, as a general rule, kept open. I was a customer of Officer & Pusey. Business called me to Council Bluffs. It was during the noon hour that I arrived at the bank. The only occupant of the bank at that time was Mr. Pusey. He invited me inside of the counter. I had been sitting there but a few moments when a stranger, at least to me, and he seemed to be to Mr. Pusey, entered the bank and engaged Mr. Pusey in conversation. He claimed he had some money that he wanted to deposit, and kept on presenting all kinds of propositions to Mr. Pusey regarding interest on the same. As we afterwards learned, he was simply trying to attract Mr. Pusey's attention. While Mr. Pusey and his customer were discussing the transaction, I was reading a newspaper. I heard a little noise in the direction of the safe, and turning around, I saw a man with moccasins on his feet in a crouching position with his ear to the dial,

turning it around while trying to catch the combination. I understand that an expert can work out a combination if given time. A whole lot of things happened in the next moment. I called Pusey's attention to the fellow at the safe. Pusey's customer gave a signal and started on the run for

Where the Burglars Tried to Work Pusey and His Combination.

the street. The man who was at the safe made a bolt for the back door, where he had entered unobserved. Pusey gave a yell, jumped the counter and rushed to the street yelling, "Stop that man!" United States Marshal Chapman was passing the bank at the time and also gave chase,

but the robbers escaped. Around the corner was a two-horse rig, hired from one of the local livery stables, in charge of a third party: Before the posse headed by Mr. Chapman could get ready, the robbers were well on their way up Indian Creek. Just beyond Loveland's Mill the posse came to the deserted livery rig and there lost the trail.

But the gang were finally caught, and it was "By" McArthur, sheriff of Harrison County, who corraled the outfit. He was in Missouri Valley when he received a dispatch recounting what had taken place. The news soon became public property. McArthur was informed by a Mr. Hoover, a stock man, that about an hour before he had seen a man in a clump of trees southeast of old St. John guarding some horses. McArthur at once surmised that they were the robbers' horses. Hastily swearing in some deputies, they, with Hoover as a guide, started on the gallop for the clump of trees. McArthur arrested the man in charge of the horses and waited for the Council Bluffs delegation. The sheriff did not have long to wait; instead of the robbers meeting their pal, McArthur and his posse were the committee on reception. The man McArthur first arrested turned State's evidence, and the other three were tried and convicted at the next term of court of Pottawattamie County. For the following five years, instead of trying to work the combination of the safes in Council Bluffs, Mr. Pusey's guests were working the stone yard at Fort Madison. Mr. Pusey afterward stated that at the same time the day before a stranger had entered the bank with similar propositions. Mr. Pusey had no doubt whatever that at the time a man was at the safe trying to work the combination, and the customer had held Mr. Pusey's attention as long as he dared. About two months before the Pusey epi-

sode occurred, the First National Bank had been robbed of $20,000 in some mysterious way. Mr. Pusey and other bankers smiled whenever the First National's loss was mentioned; in fact, they as good as stated that the First National's loss was a defalcation, they trying to cast discredit on that institution to their own advantage. But after the incident occurred that I mention in connection with Officer & Pusey's bank, the loss of the First National was easily explained.

Horse stealing was not an uncommon occurrence in the West during the early sixties. It was during the time that I was running my ranch that horse stealing became one of the lost arts. The "unwritten law" for horse stealing was hanging as soon as caught to the nearest tree. I participated in the hanging of one of the first horse thieves in our section of Iowa. The victim was caught with "the goods" while camping in a little clump of trees near Honey Creek in Pottawattamie County. With the placard "horse thief" tied around his neck his body was suspended from a tree by a wire and hung there until his clothes rotted and the flesh fell from the bone. For many years afterward that clump of trees was known as "Horse Thief Grove." With what neatness and dispatch a horse thief got his deserts. How different from the custom of the East both in application and results. It was the custom where I came from, after arresting a horse thief and while he was waiting for a Grand Jury to indict, for him to partake of the viands and recline on a comfortable bed at the expense of the county in which he stole the horse, and continue to be its guest until court convened. Able lawyers were either employed or assigned to defend him, and after the jury had brought in a verdict of "guilty," the case was carried to a higher court and sent back for a new trial on the ground

that in the judge's charge to the jury the court erred in using the word "off" instead of "from." Before the second trial came around, the main prosecuting witness had died of old age and the horse thief was acquitted for lack of evidence and turned loose to continue his former vocation.

One of my neighbors was a man by the name of Braden. He was there long before I arrived. His home was a "dug-out," a large excavation in a side hill. There, with two or three helpers, his life was spent. His sole occupation was raising circus horses. The handsome and peculiar marked horses of the circuses to-day trace their blood to the Braden breed of horses that roamed in the sixties over the prairies of Harrison and Shelby counties, Iowa. Agents from the great circuses constantly visited Braden to supply their shows with fancy colored stock. Stallions, brood mares and colts roamed at will over that vast expanse. None of them was even halter-broken. They were really a band of wild horses. Braden always kept a supply of rock salt near his ranch which brought the herd around at stated intervals. It was a hopeless task hunting for the herd, and prospective buyers would stop with Braden in his hut until the herd made its accustomed round. All the settlers raised horses, and for the lack of yards they were turned loose to roam with the Braden gang. They stuck together, for horses like individuals soon learn that numbers are the source of protection. One of the peculiarities of a horse is that night is the time he roams; what little rest he takes is in the day. One of the grandest sights I ever saw was on a moonlight night as the Braden gang of horses on the run passed up the valley of the Pigeon. As the moon shone on the variegated colors they looked like the charge of some ghostly cavalry.

The Braden gang of horses were constantly being dimin-

ished by the horse thief, but a fight that took place on the head waters of the Pigeon in the summer of eighteen sixty-nine in a measure blue-penciled that occupation. While I was entertaining at dinner old Braden and one William Cuppy, mentioned aforesaid, the mail-carrier from the East came in and reported seeing some horse thieves run-

Braden in His Younger Days.

ning the Braden gang. When he saw the herd it was crossing the Mosquito River and heading West pursued by the horse thieves. Braden proposed to intercept them. He calculated that the herd would head for home and cross the Pigeon at its head waters. As both Cuppy and my-

self had horses running with the Braden gang, we readily accepted the proposition. With two of my helpers, Braden, Cuppy and myself started on horseback up the valley of the Pigeon. We were all armed with Colt's revolvers. As we came in sight of Hall's Grove,

When the Wildwood Was in Flower.

which is near the head waters of the Pigeon, we saw the herd heading Southwest towards the Braden corral. A little curl of smoke was seen ascending from the grove. We surmised that the horse thieves had stopped for something to eat. As we started down the hollow, which led to

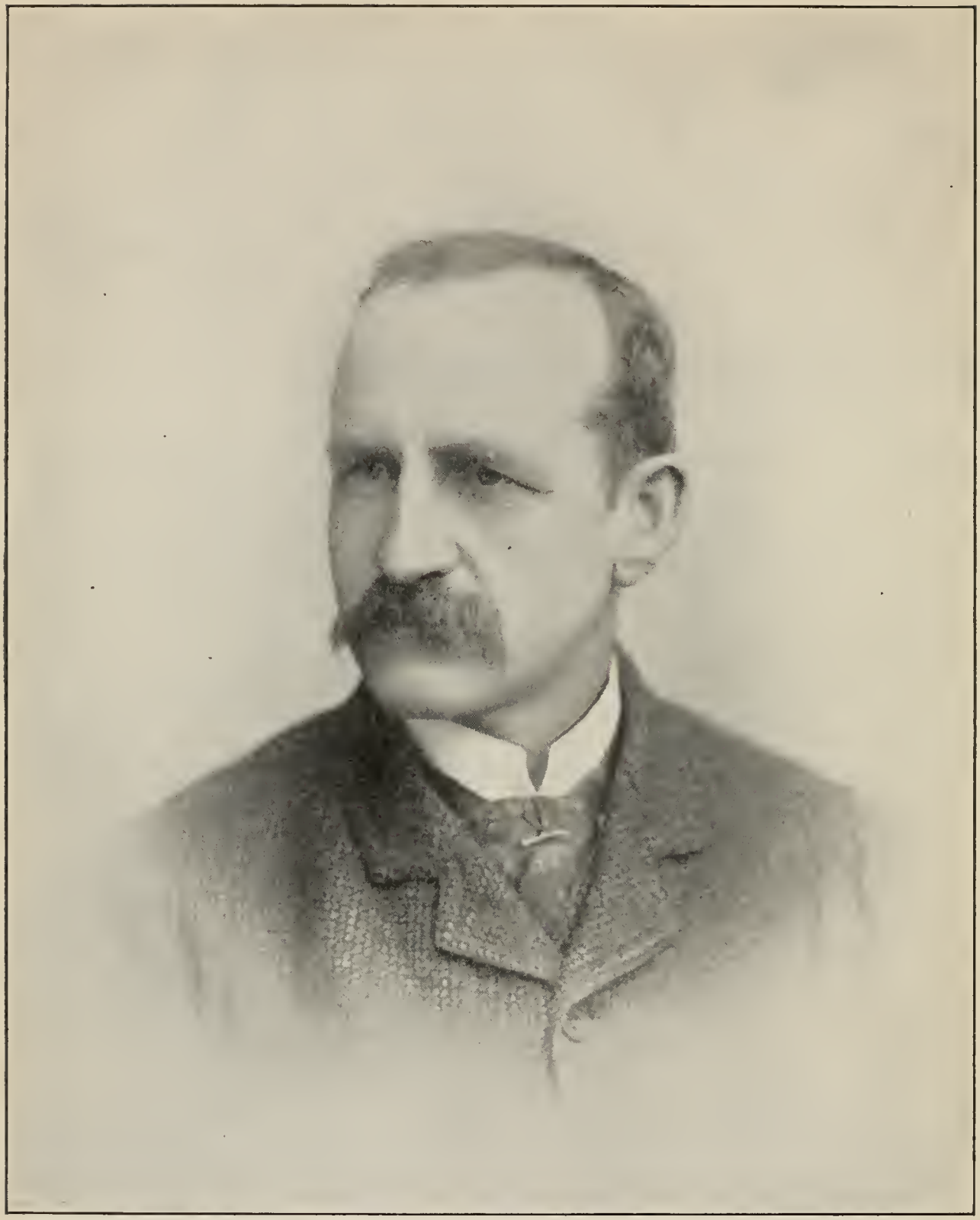
the grove, we could see some of Braden's horses straining at the end of lariats. Braden was a man of powerful physique, being over six feet tall, built in proportion and fearing nothing. The sight fired the old man to fury. With a revolver in each hand and his horse on the jump, down the incline toward the grove old Braden went. Cuppy, the helpers and myself followed. All but Braden dismounted and fought the horse thieves from behind horses and trees, but the old man stayed in the saddle. About all we could see of him was his bald head dodging around amongst the brush. With such a target, how he ever escaped with his life has always been a mystery to me. When the "smoke of battle" cleared away, two of the horse thieves lay dead on the ground, the others escaping over the prairie. Braden was shot twice and also one of the helpers, all flesh wounds. The uninjured helper was up in "first aid to the injured," and he bound up Braden and the other helper's wounds, and we headed for Doctor Cole's home, in the Boyer valley, twenty-five miles away. The fight at Hall's Grove was passed along the line, and from that time on horse thieves gave the Braden gang of horses a clear course. As settlers poured in and spools of barbed wire were unwound along the section lines cutting off the range, the old man saw his occupation gone and retired to his hut to die, and the "Braden gang of horses" became a memory.

CHAPTER V.

WINTER ON THE PRAIRIE.

THOSE who never passed a winter on a Western prairie have but a faint idea of the meaning of the word. One of the coldest and severest I ever passed was when I was mayor of Woodbine. The mercury sank into the bulb of the customary thermometer, and it required a spirit thermometer to register the cold. One night it touched forty-four degrees below zero. Clerks who slept in the stores froze their ears while in bed. Wooden sidewalks lined the streets of the town; all through the night there was a fusilade of thuds sounding like shots from muffled guns. It was the nails springing from the boards, caused by the intense cold. It was that night and the thermometer at the hotel where I stopped, which formed the foundation of the story about the nail freezing off on which hung the thermometer. It seems the nail shot out, the thermometer falling to the ground. "Sun dogs" accompanied the sun by day, and the northern lights the stars by night.

The greatest sufferers on the frontier from the winter blasts were the four-footed animals, on account of the lack of protection. It was all the newly arrived immigrants could do to find shelter for themselves, let alone the stock. I have had calves born in cornfields when it was twenty below zero. The little ones seemed to weather the con-



The Author, When Mayor of Woodbine, Iowa.

ditions, though often losing their tails. Worse than the clear cold were the blizzards. They were the boys that made "Rome howl." Neither Webster's nor Worcester's

dictionaries contain words which can do justice in describing a Western blizzard. The nearest building to my house was within about two hundred and fifty feet. The duration of a blizzard is generally three days. In one particular blizzard lasting the usual limit I never once caught sight of that building.

I still remember a snow storm which covered to the depth of about three feet a hog lot in which there were over one thousand hogs. In looking over that mantle of snow no one would have surmised that thereunder were over one thousand hogs peacefully snoring the happy hours away. The evening before was unusually warm, and the hogs went to sleep in the open lot. During the night it grew cold and the snow began falling, but the hog, being one of the laziest animals on earth, hugged the ground. In the morning, with scoop shovels, we dug them out. In digging down, as we would strike a hog the fellow would give an angry snort, as if to say, "Why the devil can't you let a fellow alone?" After a blizzard was over the first navigators were men on foot, then came the man on horseback, and then the sleigh. Sometimes during the blizzard the herd would break from the corral and go with the storm, often perishing in their tracks.

The fuel question to the early settler was an important one. Those who settled in or near the groves, which were scattered over the State, ran no risk while supplying the wood pile. But the settler, whose earthly possessions were out on the isolated storm-swept prairies, had a different problem to contend with. It was in the winter that the isolated settler got up his wood for the following summer. He had no time in summer to chop it, let alone hauling it from the grove. In winter, it was an everyday sight, no matter what the weather conditions, to see many callous-

handed sons of toil heading for the groves. Those winter trips for firewood were a continual nightmare to the early settlers. It was a winter's job to supply the spring, summer and fall firewood. Therefore, no matter what the weather conditions, off to the timber was the one daily occupation. Neither the intense cold of the Northwest, nor

The Author's Residence, Great Neck, Long Island, N Y.

even the blizzards, could retard us. Many a settler lost his life while breasting the storms for his wood supply.

I had one experience that nearly cost me my life and

that of one of my men, and four horses. Two feet of snow was on the ground and overhead was one of those leaden skies that denoted an approaching storm, as I and one of my men started for the timber. We had gotten the load chopped and commenced loading it as the snow commenced falling. At every moment the storm increased. By the time we had emerged from the grove, and struck out on the open prairie, the blizzard was on, but fortunately the wind was at our backs. The snow fell so thick that we could hardly see the leaders. I was driving and learned on that trip that in a storm if you give a horse his head he will generally land you at home. I thought I knew the road better than the leaders, and while they were continually pulling on one line, I was pulling on the other, and the result was I pulled them off the divide which led toward home and the horses got lost with the rest of us. I knew that we had traveled fully as far as would have taken us home, and as darkness came on, we realized that we were lost. We unhitched the horses from the load, unharnessed them, piled the harness on the load of wood, turned two of the horses loose, and mounted the other two. We soon lost sight in the storm of the two horses we had turned loose. Our mounts struck out, and I hoped toward home, but they evidently had lost their bearings. The only thing that saved our lives was that the storm ceased at midnight. The clouds cleared away and left us as clear a sky as I ever saw. The snow had frozen our clothes, the horses' hair was covered with frost, and we looked like ghosts on horseback. We were so cold we could not stand riding any further and dismounted. Our hands were so cold we could not lead the horses, so we turned them loose, but they followed us, the animal instinct telling them that in difficulties look to human kind for protection.

It was the practice in those days for the isolated settlers on the prairies on the stormy nights in winter to keep a light burning in some conspicuous window the night through, to guide anyone who might be lost. We wallowed our way to the highest hill and scanned the horizon like mariners at sea looking for a beacon light. Bill Rumsey, a conductor on one of the first freight trains that went over the Northwestern, west of Boone, had presented me with a red lantern, and that lantern was my beacon light. Peary was no happier as he stood at the North Pole than I was when I saw off to the Northwest about five miles away a red light. We made a bee-line for it with the two horses following. We wallowed through snow drifts to our armpits, pitched headlong into gulleys filled with snow, waded waist deep in slush while crossing creeks and slues, crawled on our hands and knees up rough brakes on hill tops, rolled over and over down inclines, and were constantly in fear of our lives from the close proximity of the stumbling horses. As the first streak of daylight was coming, we soon recognized the old familiar landmarks, which led to the Pigeon Valley, and had no difficulty the balance of the way. The two horses we first turned loose had arrived ahead of us, and the load of wood was located the following day.

The railroads over the prairies had their experience also with the beautiful snow. Before the time of snow fences the trains were often stuck in the cuts. I remember after one storm, in particular, that the Northwewstern never turned a wheel for three weeks. I saw a freight train of forty cars in a cut completely covered over, with nothing in sight but the smokestack of the locomotive. The trainmen had retreated to the nearest farm house. I have heard of a span of horses coming into town with the driver sitting upright in the seat, reins in hand, frozen to death.

I have no doubt whatever that in the intense cold of the Northwest a human being can freeze to death without the least pain and not knowing he is freezing. With one of my men I had an experience that would confirm that opinion. While operating my stock ranch the territory over which I had absolute ownership consisted of two square

First Touch of Winter on the Northwestern.

miles. The buildings were on the southerly end of the property. That particular winter several stacks of hay were at the northern end of the ranch. On account of a scarcity of hay at the feed yards I and one of the men started for the other end for hay. There was two feet of snow on the ground, the wind was in the north, and it was twenty-five below zero. A hay-rack is as well ventilated a conveyance as any fresh-air fiend could desire.

While going up we sat opposite each other. A white spot would commence to show itself on my face and my man would say, "Mr. Stanton, your left cheek is freezing." A rubbing would restore circulation. The next minute I would see some part of his face turn white. "Dick, your right ear is freezing," and that was the condition over the two miles; but when we arrived at the hay-stack and got alongside of it with the horses' noses to the south, you would have thought we had gone crazy the way we jumped into that stack. It was either work or freeze. As we traveled back with our circulation restored, the wind at our backs, the sun shining down upon us as we hugged into the hay, we could hardly realize that a few moments before we were actually freezing and didn't know it.

Being a lover of animals, nothing disturbed my slumbers more than when one of those terrific blizzards was on, for I would realize the suffering of those dumb animals who looked to me for protection. No matter how much lumber and nails you used, those awful winds would find an opening; even a knot-hole seemed to be enough. At last I solved the problem, and my scheme was followed by all my neighbors. Instead of stacking my small grain in the fields where it was cut and thrashing it there, and, as was usually the custom, burning the straw, I had the bulk of the unthrashed grain hauled to one of the cattle-yards and stacked alongside of a pole-shed I erected. I selected a level place about forty feet square and built a shed of heavy forked poles about ten feet long, set them in the ground about three feet, and about ten feet apart, laid poles and brush across the top, and, with the exception of a narrow entrance in the southern exposure, boarded the shed on the outside. When the grain was thrashed we set the thrashing machine so that the straw-carrier

was over the shed. After the grain was thrashed, the straw covered the shed to the depth of, say, twenty feet, and at least fifteen feet thick all around it. No wind could penetrate fifteen feet of straw. Looking at that immense straw pile one would little surmise that in the center of it was a shed forty feet square and seven feet in the clear. With the exception of the entrance I built a barbed-wire fence around the straw pile. With the boards on the inside and the fence on the outside, the cattle could not disturb the straw. When the blizzard was on I knew that at least some of my cattle were as comfortable as myself, and as I would look out of the entrance of my straw pile shed at the howling blizzard I could realize the protection and comfort of the Esquimaux in his hut in the frozen north.

As one rode over the prairies of western Iowa in the early sixties he could see the bones of wild animals that had become extinct. Frequently you would see the horns of deer nearly consumed by time and the devastating prairie fire. Up to and during the early fifties, herds of buffalo, elk and deer roamed over western Iowa and eastern Nebraska, contiguous to the Missouri River, but the terrific winters of the middle fifties drove the buffalo toward the foothills of the Rockies, and exterminated the elk and deer. One of the winters of the middle fifties was known for years as "the winter of the deep snow." The snow was so deep and fell so level that the deer were unable to reach food or shelter, and became an easy prey to man, but more particularly to the wolves. The wolves could skip over the crust of snow while the poor animal, with its sharp hoofs, would break through to its belly and become an easy prey. The buffalo was also exterminated, not by the elements, but by man. Thousands were killed

simply for their skins. Man is forever hunting the wild, often simply for its head, skin or plumage, and where

Would I Were on the Plains Again.

there are no wild animals to kill or pelts to obtain he then turns on his fellow man, and tries to remove the hide from him.

CHAPTER VI.

RUNNING A STOCK RANCH.

It was while I was in Iowa that the transformation came in the harvesting of small grain. I saw the transformation from the cradle, not to the grave, but to the self-binder. The advent of the railroad brought us the modern machinery. The cradle was laid aside for what was known as the dropper, a machine which cut the small grain, it falling on to a wicker platform, and when of sufficient quantity to make a bundle the driver would drop the platform and the grain slid off. It required six men to keep the grain bound up, before the next round. The next improvement was the Marsh harvester. With that machine three men accomplished what it took seven with the dropper. The three men rode on the machine. The Marsh harvester cut the grain, elevated it to a scoop receptacle, alongside of which stood two of the men on a platform binding the grain. The next machine and the most complete that any one could desire was the self-binder. Think of driving into a field of grain with a machine that a boy could handle, which would cut the grain, elevate it into a receptacle, circle each bundle as it formed with twine, tie the twine into a knot, cut the twine and throw the bundle, tightly bound, clear of the machine, and immediately repeat the operation; such was the self-binder.

What a godsend to the "women folks" was the self-binder! In the days of the dropper they had to bake bread for a week, kill all the chickens on the place, and peel a barrel of potatoes to feed a lot of hungry harvesters. With the self-binder there were only the regular household, no transient guests. Many a bright summer's morning I have driven into a field of yellow grain with my self-binder, with

A Self-binder.

the ribbons over three horses abreast, comfortably seated in a cushioned seat with a canopy to protect me from the hot rays of the sun, with a long straw, I on one end and an occasional mint julep on the other, and, before the sun went down, with the aid of one of the boys, put twenty-five acres of grain into the shock, and never turned a hair.

As the great prairies began to settle up, and the range

cut off, the day of grass-fed cattle saw its finish. Corn-fed steers came instead. Thousands of acres of prairie were broken up, corn planted, and the cattle yarded to be fattened and shipped to the Eastern markets. Absolutely nothing but corn was fed. It was fed in the ear, broken about twice in two and fed in a large box, similar to a table and about as high. The droppings from the cattle were as yellow as corn meal; in fact, it was ground corn, so to speak. In all feed-yards there were twice the number of hogs as of cattle; the hogs were fattened from the droppings of the steers. We calculated what passed through one steer would fatten two hogs. The cattle ate the corn, the hogs the droppings, and we ate the hogs.

The feed-lot was the cause of the dehorning of cattle. As it is with humanity, about every other steer wanted his share and part of the other fellow's, and some, after they had eaten all they could, tried to keep the others away. The result was they were continually prodding each other, and dehorning was a necessity for fattening purposes. It was also a godsend to the shipper. The dehorning process was simply to run the steers into a shute that narrowed as it led on to where only one steer could stand. We would then clap a clamp over his neck, and, with a common hand-saw, saw his horns off close to the head. I was not aware of the anatomical formation, so far as the horn is concerned, of the head of cattle until after I had done my first dehorning. I was riding over the range shortly before sundown a few days after some dehorning, and as I glanced at a steer I saw the sun right through his head. It seems the horn of cattle is hollow; that is, there is simply a pith in it. Sometimes the pith dries up. In the case of this animal the pith had fallen out, leaving a hollow through his head. I have heard of "the wind blew through his whis-

kers," but I never saw a case before where it blew through his head. That steer should never get excited, as the wind blowing through his head would certainly keep his brain cool.

How much pleasanter it is to handle an intelligent animal than a stupid one. What a difference there is between

The Beef Trust Will Get the Profit.

a horse and a horned animal. Though the ground is covered with snow the horse has intelligence enough to know that there is plenty of feed underneath, and paws to it, but the cattle will stand and starve to death. It used to make me so mad that I felt like grabbing them by the horns and shoving their heads down to the grass.

In my life on the prairies, where neighbors were few and far between, the most dangerous element to contend

with was the prairie fires. In my boyhood days, as a hunter in the Adirondacks, I learned never to go into the North Woods without a guide. In the fall of the year never go out on the prairies of the West without a match. Many a time while traveling afoot, horseback or in my old Schutler wagon, I saved my life when I saw a prairie fire coming by setting fire to the grass and driving on to the burned portion. There is nothing more entrancing than to watch a prairie fire, especially at night, yet it is anything but entrancing when it is coming with a high wind toward your earthly possessions. I have lost miles of fence and hundreds of tons of hay through prairie fires, and have back-fired against it and fought it up hill and down twenty-four hours at a stretch.

What a dreary waste back in the early sixties was the country west of the Mississippi River! Miles upon miles of unoccupied land with not a tree to break the monotony of that undulating plain. The only timber in Iowa was a fringe along the river bank and here and there a grove. God provided for the early settlers, where fuel was concerned, by allowing an occasional grove of timber to escape the devastating fire of the prairie. The early inhabitants of Iowa settled in or near the groves. The cold winters necessitated this. Before the advent of the railroad the fuel question was an important one. On the plains of Nebraska there was no timber. The Lord evidently had no idea anybody would settle there. The early settlers in that State set aside a field of corn for fuel. There is worse fuel than ear corn. On the advent of the railroads, coal became the universal fuel. As the great prairie settled up, groves of trees were planted and hedges set out, and that barren waste of the sixties was transformed into a beautiful wooded landscape.

About the only recreation of the farmer on the Western prairie was to go to town. With the tired housewife and little ones tucked in a wagon, off they would go. The town was the Casino of the farmer. It was the meeting place of the isolated settlers. On all the holidays the farmers went to town. All kinds of excuses were offered to "get to go" to town. I recall that the whole countryside went to town one day to see the eclipse of the sun. With the coming of the iron horse came the styles from the East, the money-shark, and discontent. In the good old days everybody was contented. Mortgages, a stranger in the land heretofore, began to appear on the records. On my way to town one day I met one of the old settlers, who said: "Well, Stanton, I have mortgaged the farm to one of them 'ere money critters. I had to pay ten per cent. interest, by gosh! and a bonus, I think they called it, to git the money. Betsey said she wouldn't wear that darned old sunbonnet to town again. My boy told me he would leave the farm if I didn't get him a top-buggy to take his gal out riding, and our little girl has cried ever since she see'd that young lady git off the cars at Woodbine with them high-heel shoes and a feather in her hat. Well, I be dog-goned, Stanton, if I ain't going to see some of this life with the rest on 'em."

In the groves of timber scattered throughout the State of Iowa, the All-seeing One provided fuel for the earlier settler. It was the custom that each settler should have the privilege of owning a sufficient acreage in the groves for his wants in the fuel line, and it was the unwritten law that those who owned more of the grove than they absolutely needed were compelled to sell the newcomer a portion of their holdings. If some Rockefeller had come sailing along in the early days of Iowa, he would likely have formed a

stock company to acquire the groves of the State,and would have had the settlers where the Standard Oil Company has the people of this country at the present time. Some Rockefeller might have tried the game, but he wouldn't have found the submissive individual of to-day, nor would he have found corrupt legislators to enact, nor courts to construe, the law to his liking, but he would have found a note in his morning mail notifying him that it would be beneficial for his health if he took a change of venue and to be quick about it.

The "Co-operation Society" of Six Mile Grove, in which I was interested, demonstrated the fact that a "holding company" is not absolutely essential for the success of an enterprise. If commercialism as practiced to-day had been *in esse* in the early days of Iowa, how natural it would have been for one of these "Napoleons of finance" to have cornered the groves of Iowa and made the poor settler of the sixties pay tribute, so this "successful" business man could travel in European waters in his yacht, his daughter marry a prince, and his son by a display of the predatory wealth of the parent demoralize the youth of the land.

The West should insist on constitutional conventions to revise the National and State constitutions, so that the people can bring them up to date, and brush aside the old theories and provisions under which the robber Barons hang on to their ill-gotten gains. What does the Standard Oil crowd care if you dissolve their corporations so long as you do not wrest from them their money? So revise the Statute Law that the government or any citizen can bring an action against any wrong-doer for a readjustment of his affairs, in which action, on proof that the defendant has acquired any portion of his wealth by fraud, the court shall have the power to decree that all of his wealth shall

be turned into the public treasury; and that no Statute of Limitations shall apply to such an action.

The courts have decided that the various Standard Oil companies are illegal combinations. The law should be that all malefactors who have acquired wealth through those companies must disgorge.

If the malefactors cry "confiscation," let the people answer, "No, simply an equitable, moral readjustment."

On account of the long distance to the towns, keeping the larder supplied was one of the problems constantly confronting us. It was fifteen miles from my ranch to the nearest town. Having to make a round trip of thirty miles to supply our wants, it necessitated our keeping a close watch on the "trestle-board." I remember once having to make the thirty miles simply for a match. Forever after that trip, a piece of pasteboard was hung up in the dining-room; whenever any one discovered that anything was needed its name was written on the pasteboard, so when the usual trip was made to town the "score card" would show what was required.

Until I went to Iowa I thought the Sun, as regards vegetation, was more important than the Moon, but I soon learned that the Moon was the "cock of the walk." The Moon seemed to regulate everything. During the planting season about all you heard was "the full of the Moon," "the dark of the Moon" and other moonshines. On one of my trips to Woodbine, I met a neighbor with his horses on the jump for home. I inquired what was the matter, and he yelled back the Moon fulled at six o'clock and he must get those potatoes in before that hour or they would all run to vines. One of my neighbors had it so badly that he actually told me that one of his children was doomed to be

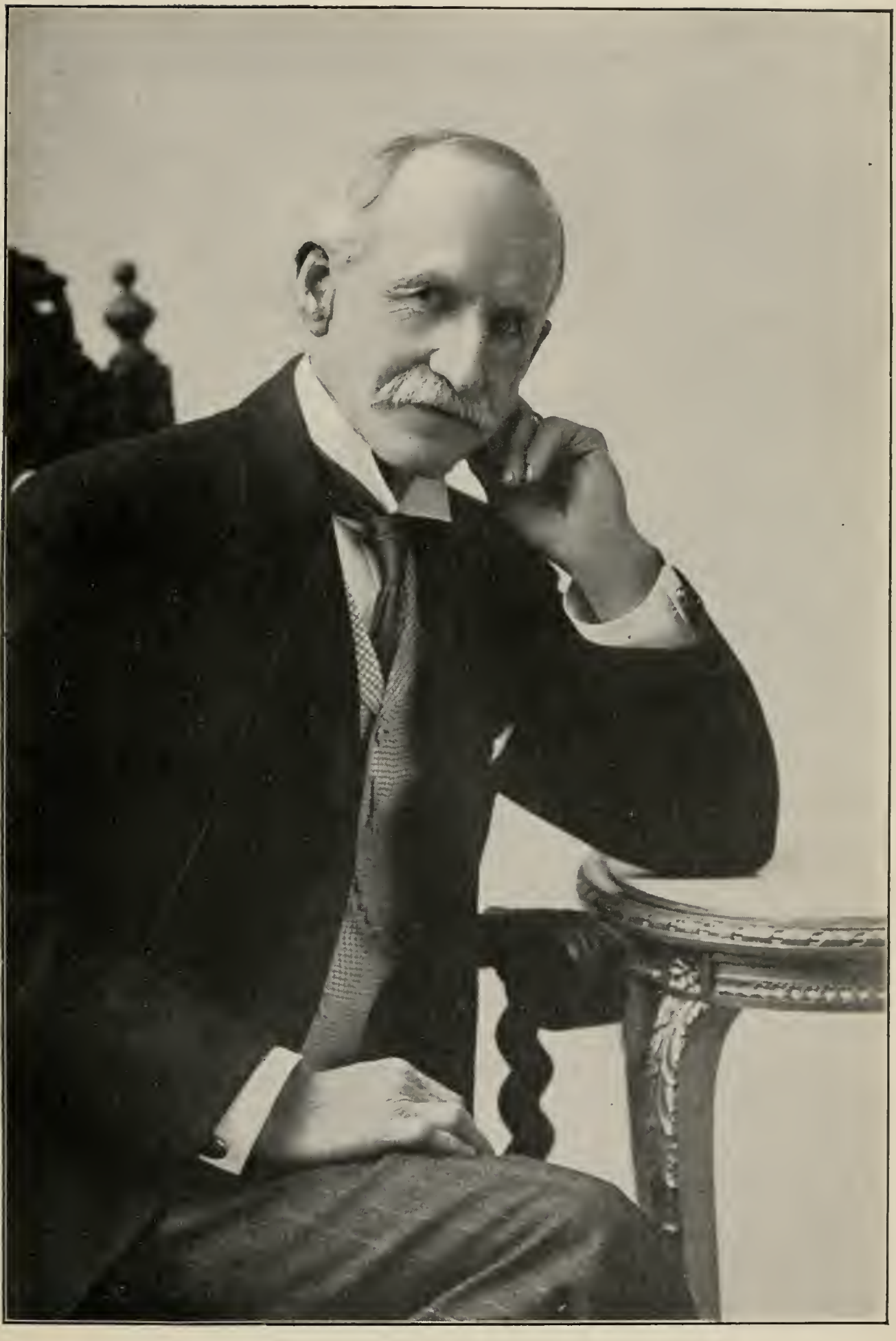
unlucky all its life as it was born at the wrong time of the Moon.

There were two rules which everybody followed—never pass a rattlesnake without killing it, and when you went to town call for your neighbor's mail. I use the word neighbor, but it hardly applies to the situation, as the word "neighbor" with me covered a circuit of forty miles in diameter. I was amused at a remark a fellow made when I settled on the Pigeon. His nearest "neighbor" was fourteen miles away. My location was about six miles from him, whereupon the fellow made the remark: "Well, I guess I will have to move; neighbors are getting too thick." Speaking of rattlesnakes, the Indian was the only individual who let the rattlesnakes alone. The rattlesnake will always give you warning, and will not attack you unless first attacked. The Indian seemed to appreciate these two cardinal virtues of the rattlesnake. The bite of the rattler is deadly poison, and an antidote is necessary to save life. Whiskey was as good an antidote as one could take, and no larder was complete without it. A weakness of one of my neighbors was partaking too freely of the "Oh, be joyful"; in fact, he was under the influence more times than over it. Yet he offered a very sensible excuse: "You see, boys, it is this way. When one of you fellows gets stung with a rattler you rush all over the neighborhood, losing lots of time, hunting for whiskey, and often die before you get it; but when a rattler jumps me, the remedy is already there, and I keep right on plowing." Mud is also a remedy. I recall one time visiting an isolated stock ranch, and, as we approached, we saw the only herder in a peculiar position on the ground. As we came up to him he had one leg bare to the knee in a hole in the ground, with a pail of water beside him, and he was tamping wet

dirt around the leg. He had been bitten by a rattler and was applying the only remedy at hand.

In the fall following my arrival in the Hawkeye State, there was a hot political contest going on, and I attended one of the meetings at Harlan, the county seat of Shelby County. Speaking of Harlan, I will never forget the way they distributed the mail. The post office was in the hotel where I stopped. The "post office" consisted of two dry goods boxes, one where you deposited the mail and the other where you got it. When the mail-carrier arrived, he would hand the pouch to the postmaster, who was the proprietor of the hotel, also hostler and waiter combined. The combination postmaster, proprietor, hostler and waiter would dump the mail into one of the boxes, and whenever a citizen called for his mail, he would dig into the dry goods box, look over its contents and take what mail belonged to him, and thus the mail in the early sixties was distributed in the shire-town of Shelby County.

I naturally have heard in my life many political issues discussed, but I never heard of a nightshirt being an issue until that night at Harlan. There was a joint debate between the two opposing candidates for representative in the legislature. The district generally went Republican. The Democratic candidate was a farmer, the Republican candidate a lawyer. The majority of voters were farmers. Many of them had never heard of a nightshirt, let alone owning one. In the heat of a former debate the Democratic candidate had charged his opponent with being an aristocrat in that he wore a nightshirt. The Republican candidate at first denied it, but at the Harlan meeting the Democratic candidate produced the necessary proof, and from that moment the Republican candidate's chances were



The Author.

doomed; in fact, if I recollect rightly, he withdrew from the contest.

What a comfort were letters and newspapers in our isolated homes! It was a long way to the post-offices, so the rule of getting each other's mail was strictly adhered to, and often, when taken from the post-office, it was a long time and by circuitous routes before it finally reached the owner. When one got his neighbor's mail it was not expected that he would go miles out of the way to deliver it. Sometimes it would be a week reaching its final destination. One of the most disagreeable nights I ever passed was trying to locate a letter with other mail which had been taken out of the post-office by one of my neighbors.

There was a young lady from the East visiting us at the time, who was a great letter writer, and I thought she would drive us all crazy trying to figure out how she could get her mail to and from the distant post-office. On one of my trips to town I found my mail had been taken out the day before by one of my neighbors. The postmaster was unable to tell to whom he delivered it. It wasn't a matter of great concern to me, as I knew it was safe somewhere and would eventually get around. On my return home I made a great mistake. Instead of saying there wasn't any mail, I said it was taken out by somebody. The words had no sooner left my mouth than our guest gave a yell like a Comanche Indian and almost had a fit. It seems she was expecting an important letter. All her letters, both going and coming, seemed "important," and those going were generally marked "in haste." As evening approached the more hysterical she got. My wife told me there wouldn't be any sleep in that house that night if I didn't strike out and get that mail.

It was more than a night's ride to all my neighbors, so I divided up the territory with one of my men. He was to cover one-half and I the other. I was in hopes that my nearest neighbor, who was five miles away, would be the man, but there was no such luck in store for me. If I had known what was ahead of me I would never have left the place, but slept in one of the barns. There was nothing delightful riding over the prairies in the dark of the moon, trying to steer clear of dogs while waking your neighbors up in the middle of the night. The first streak of daylight was shedding its luster over the horizon as Captain Dyes' place near Gallon's Grove came in sight three miles away. The captain's was the last place on my list. As I left the last place before the captain's—the distance between the two being seven miles—I came near starting home, believing my man had gotten the "important" letter on his route. It was lucky that I didn't turn back, as the captain had the coveted prize. Old Sol was showing his scalp above the prairie grass as I reached the captain's. In the cattle-yard was the captain milking the cows. I propounded the now stereotyped question, "Got any mail for me?" "Yes," came back the reply. "Well, Cap, for God's sake let me have it." I explained the situation, and he laughed so hard he rolled off the milk stool. Headachy and hungry, I started for my home, fifteen miles away. When I arrived the house was in an uproar. Nobody had slept a wink. The young lady had collapsed at 2 A.M., and they had sent for a doctor. My man had returned at that hour with the report that some mail had been lost by Bill Cuppy near Leland's Grove, and he believed my mail was among the rest. The first thing I did on my return was to dispatch one of the men to Woodbine with a request to the postmaster: "Don't deliver any of my mail to anybody without an order."

CHAPTER VII.

SHIPPING STOCK TO CHICAGO.

As already stated, the Northwestern was the first road across Iowa, and the trains were run in a go-as-you-please kind of style. There was one passenger train each way a day and several freights. They had a schedule just to look at, but not to run by. They would stop anywhere for anything or anybody. They tell a story that Knox Shufelt, a passenger conductor, held his train while he acted as best man at a wedding at a near-by farm house. Like the governors of North and South Carolina, it was a long distance between stations. As soon as the railroads got through, we stock men took advantage of it and commenced shipping our stock over the road to Chicago. The engineer who ran the freight I usually shipped on was Johnny Wells, and the conductor was Jim Folsom. The boys were great hunters and carried their guns along, and while passing through Carroll County, where there was a good supply of prairie chickens, they often stopped the train to knock over a dozen or so. They used to run through Harrison and Crawford Counties as if the Old Nick was after them, so as to have plenty of time to hunt in Carroll.

You who are riding on the Northwestern to-day, with its double track and its frequent and swift-moving trains, think of a freight train standing on the only track for

hours at a time, and the trainmen off on the prairies hunting chickens. When we arrived at Boone, the end of the division, the trainmen were often called up by the superintendent to explain why they could not make schedule time. The boys spoke of "hot boxes," "broke in two coming over the hills of the divide," and when they ran out of excuses we stock men would come to the rescue and tell the superintendent the cattle were getting down badly and we had to stop and get them on their feet again.

There is an end to everything, and there was a finish to Folsom hunting prairie chickens while running a freight train. Jim was caught red-handed, and I was in at the kill. One morning, bright and early, I had loaded four cars of cattle and two of hogs at St. John, now Missouri Valley, and Jim came along from Council Bluffs on his way to Boone. It was a beautiful day in the fall of the year, and the boys thought they would take a shot at some prairie chickens. Wells pulled the throttle wide open, and away we flew up the valley of the Boyer and over the divide for Carroll County. At a level place in the road the boys brought the train to a stop, and over the prairie we went after chickens. The train was entirely deserted. We had been gone about an hour when there came resounding over the prairies a long-drawn-out whistle of a locomotive. It seems the superintendent had started out on a prospecting tour from Boone and had found Jim's deserted train. The cold chills commenced to run up and down the boys' vertebræ as they caught sight of the superintendent's car. Jim was equal to the occasion, however. Picking out six of the fattest chickens, he approached the stern-looking superintendent with a smile, and, handing out the chickens, said: "Mr. Superintendent, allow me." Jim by invitation rode to the next siding in the superintendent's car,

and what took place at the little séance between them Jim would never tell, but the next time I went over the road I noticed we did not stop at our favorite hunting grounds, and as we rolled over the ties through Carroll County, Jim sat in the corner of the caboose looking through the win-

"Johnny" Wells.

dow, and would take a long breath every time he saw a prairie chicken fly over the train. But it did not follow that Jim never got any more prairie chickens, as they were occasionally lying dead along the track by coming in contact with the telegraph wires. The prairie chicken would

make a good carrier-pigeon, so to speak, as it is a rapid flyer. Like the quail, its breast is large and most palatable.

I have had lots of trouble with four-footed animals in stock cars and have forgotten most of those occurrences, but I will never forget the set-to on a locomotive, between five of us on one side and a Woodbine, Iowa, saloon-keeper on the other, who had a sudden attack of delirium tremens. The material of the first grade of the railroads through Iowa was prairie dirt. Often the Boyer River was out of its banks from frequent rains, and the grade of the Northwestern was washed away, and for miles the track was under water, preventing the moving of trains. In the early days of railroad building in the West the main object was to reach distant points as soon as possible and get trains to running, as there was always some incentive offered for rapid construction; therefore, proper grades, punching dirt under ties and driving spikes was often sacrificed to the main point to "get there." The first grade of the Northwestern down the Boyer was only about three feet higher than the bottom lands, so often in the rainy season the track was under water, sometimes to the depth of several feet.

While I was at Sioux City on a little business trip there occurred a terrific storm, and when I arrived at Missouri Valley on my way home no trains were running on the Northwestern, as the track in places was covered with water and the wires were down in every direction. There was an important message at Missouri Valley which was necessary to be sent to Dunlap, the end of the division, and they were sending a wild engine over the road to deliver it. The engine, if I recollect rightly, was in charge of Tommy Burling, a friend of mine, and knowing that I wanted to go

to Woodbine, he invited me to ride on the engine. Besides Burling, his fireman and myself, the other occupants of the locomotive were the Woodbine saloon-keeper and two Dunlap men. During my term of office as Mayor of Woodbine I had considerable trouble with this particular saloon-keeper. He was a hard drinker and had an attack of delirium tremens during my term.

We were moving slowly along and occasionally going it blind so far as the track was concerned, expecting to strike a piece of undermined track and topple over, when "the man from behind the bar" struck Burling a terrific blow and grabbed the throttle, pulling it wide open. I yelled to everybody that the fellow had an attack of delirium tremens. The fireman struck the saloon-keeper over the head with his coal shovel, dropping him to the floor. Burling at the same time jumped for the throttle. The maniac was soon on his feet again, and right there began the hottest fight in close quarters that I was ever in. We fought in the narrow space of the locomotive and all over the tender, on top of the coal, but we finally dumped the saloon-keeper off of the engine into the water. Burling said he would rather ditch the engine than let that fellow get aboard again, so he put on more steam, and luckily for us we pulled away from our guest, and the last we saw of him he was running and half swimming along the railroad grade.

On our arrival at Woodbine I notified the saloon-keeper's partner of the occurrence; they immediately dispatched a boat down the valley and finally landed their man.

I have unloaded a good many carloads of stock, but I never saw cattle unload themselves except once, and that was a carload of Texas steers while going down the steep winding grade of the Northwestern Railroad from Moin-

gona to the Des Moines River bridge. The grade on both sides was steep, with many curves, and the boys used to run down those grades as if old Nick was after them, so as to get a good start for the up-grade on the other side. The time I refer to we were running wild, being a stock train of twenty-five cars with no other freight. The boys had the customary orders to keep out of the way of the regular

Moingona Bridge, Scene of Kate Shelly's Heroic Act.

trains. At the last station, the engineer saw he had time to reach Boone to meet the regular passenger train going West if he put on a little more steam, so when we struck the Moingona grade we were going about forty miles an hour.

The car containing the Texas steers was out of repair, having no crossbar at one of the exits. A crossbar prevents

any pressure against the side doors. As the train rounded the second curve we saw a Texas steer going horns over hoofs down the steep incline at the side of the track, the next moment we saw another. A side door of the car went next, and then came another steer and then another. The conductor, Charlie Dow, tried to signal the engineer from the caboose, as none of the train crew dared to climb onto the top of the train. The engineer never looked back, all he was thinking about was getting onto a siding at Boone. In fact, he couldn't have stopped anyway, so on he went. Notwithstanding I was afraid the caboose would jump the track any minute, I couldn't help but laugh as I saw steer after steer roll down the embankment. As we struck the bridge, a single wooden span, I saw the sight of my life, a steer going through the air turning somersault after somersault, and disappearing into the river. As we started up the grade towards Boone, the train slackened and we all climbed on top and ran towards the car which contained the Texas steers. About half of them were still in the car, and were rushing each other from one end to the other, and every now and then a steer would tumble out. As the train came to the switch yard at Boone, the rest of them jumped out and the country between Moingona and Boone was alive with Texas steers.

We intended to unload at Boone, spending the night and the next day there. On account of the defective car, the owner of the Texas steers put it up to the railroad company, and that night and all the next day Boone and the entire country-side were rounding up Texas steers. Some were so badly crippled that they were shot, others were sold to local butchers. One vicious cuss had wandered down into a slue on the river bottom and had injured two or three horses and men trying to corral him, and the rail-

road company ordered him shot. Nobody dared to go near him, so they got the best marksman in Boone to wing him. About all you could see of the steer was his head above the slue grass, and at this the fellow fired. He would fire, and about all the steer would do would be to shake his head. The fellow fired four times and he said he would take his oath he had hit the steer between the horns every shot. The animal made a charge towards us and the Boone man plugged him behind one of the fore legs, and the gentleman from the Lone Star State dropped. I there learned that an animal's head, especially that of a Texas steer, is not a vital spot, as every one of those four shots had struck him squarely in the forehead between the eyes.

Not having been born with a silver spoon in my mouth, and having to paddle my own canoe, I naturally have tackled some hard propositions, but the toughest job I ever undertook was to start from the Missouri River and land a consignment of cattle in the Union Stock Yards, Chicago, without a loss. The first run was three hundred miles across the State of Iowa to the Mississippi River; it generally took thirty-six hours, two nights and a day. In loading cattle, on account of the freight charges, you naturally would get every steer in a car you could. The steers had "standing room only"; consequently, if a steer got down, which was a very common occurrence, on account of the fatigue from standing too long, it was either to get that steer on his feet again or he would be trampled to death, and away would go the profit on that car of cattle. Sometimes you could raise him by standing alongside of the car and using your prod—a pole about six feet long with a sharp iron point in one end of it—but often you had to climb into the end window of the car and go right among them, horns, droppings, and all, and take your

chances of ever getting out alive, the trainmen paying no attention to you, the train running thirty miles an hour, and maybe it is night and as dark as pitch. As I look back to the days and nights when I was a shipper of stock to Chicago, and recall the many horn-breadth escapes I had, the wonder is I am alive.

Many a time I have started from the Missouri River for

The Home of the Stockman and His Herd.

Chicago with a trainload of stock and never got a wink of sleep for twenty-four hours at a stretch. I recall the night at Belle Plaine that we pulled a dead Mexican out of a car of Texas steers. Instead of insisting on having his car sidetracked to get up some steers that were down, he foolishly crawled into the car and to his finish. What a great relief it was on our arrival at the yards at Chicago, as we turned the stock and prod pole over to our commis-

sioner and started for the Transit House for a bath, shave and a change of raiment, and to enter a clean dining-room again for the first square meal in four days, and, after the stock was sold, to return home dressed as gentlemen. No one would have thought that the well-dressed individual comfortably lounging in a Pullman with an ebony employee catering to his wants, was the same unkempt, dirty citizen who, but a few hours before, with a four-days' growth of whiskers on his chin, was in a filthy stock car trying to get a steer on his feet.

A character who traveled under the sobriquet of "Canada Bill" was well known along the Northwestern as the kingpin three-card monte man of the Northwest. "Humbug" Barnum, the greatest showman the world ever knew, said a fool was born every minute, and the daily and nightly occupation of "Canada Bill" was trying to confirm the truth of that saying. Bill and his cappers worked the Northwestern between "the two rivers," and many a bank roll of persons green as regards the ways of this world, found its way via "the picture card" to Bill's exchequer.

On my way back from Chicago, after a shipment of stock, being unable to sleep, I left my berth and went forward to the smoking car for a smoke. I walked the length of the smoker to see if I knew anybody. The only familiar face was that of a fellow by the name of Jack Bridgers. Bridgers posed as a traveling man. He traveled all right, sometimes mighty fast. He claimed as his home Fort Laramie, Wyoming. He was known around the old Herndon House at Omaha—where I made his acquaintance—as a "road agent," one of those fellows who stop stage coaches in the lonely passes of the mountains to take up a collection for present necessities and future wants. As I sat down beside him with a "Hello, Jack!" he didn't seem to

like it being recognized; at first he denied his identity, but he soon mellowed and we talked of times along the Big Muddy.

As the train stopped at a small place called Colo, there climbed aboard a fellow who to all appearances was a typical hayseed. I immediately recognized the newcomer as "Canada Bill." Personating an old farmer was Bill's favorite rôle. I don't believe any one but myself knew who he was except the trainmen. Bill always made himself solid with them. He had hardly taken his seat, which was just across the passage away from the one occupied by Bridgers and myself, when in a loud voice he commenced one of his tales of woe. In regular old farmer parlance he said he had just come over from the Calhoun County Fair and had been swindled out of a whole lot of money by some three-card monte men, and he had bought a deck of cards to learn the trick himself. I told Bridgers who the hayseed was, he said he had heard of "Canada Bill," but had never met him. It was but a short time before Bill commenced separating some of the boys from their spare change.

In the game of three-card monte it is an easy matter to guess the picture card unless some other card is substituted in the act of throwing. One of the tricks of the game is that the manipulator changes the location of the picture card after the three cards have been thrown. This change is made when the bettor momentarily takes his eyes off of the cards while hunting for his money. Bridgers said to me, "See me make my fare from Omaha to Laramie, and I will make it by an old trick if your man don't smell a mouse." Bill threw the cards. Bridgers offered to bet twenty he could tell the picture card. Bill said, "I'll go you, neighbor." Bridgers had his twenty ready, covered Bill's, and

before Bill had time to wink, Bridgers pulled a knife from his boot, drove it through the picture card and pulled his gun, with the remark, "I have dirked the picture card." Canada William was a good loser and never whimpered as Bridgers raked in the pot. The display of the artillery of

The Mother Watching the Branding of Its Offspring.

the "traveling man" from Fort Laramie broke up the game; the hayseed from the Calhoun County Fair lit a perfecto, pulled his hat over his eyes, with the remark, "Well, I guess I struck an exception to Old Barnum's rule."

CHAPTER VIII.

ATMOSPHERIC DISTURBANCES.

While I was raising stock in the valley of the Pigeon for the benefit of the Beef Trust and the railroads, I saw the start and finish of one of the greatest scourges that ever afflicted a farming community—the destructive locust or grasshopper. Anything that can bring a fast-running train to a standstill certainly deserves recognition. Many a time I saw grasshoppers stop a passenger train on the Northwestern. I don't mean they would catch hold of the cars and stop the train by main strength, or hop aboard and pull the bell cord, but they covered the rails in countless thousands, and, like the tramp preferring to die rather than move, the locomotive in squashing out their lives so greased the track that the driving-wheels failed to hold to the rails. One fall, about the time the corn crop was nearing maturity, there came whirling through the air millions of grasshoppers. Looking toward the sun they appeared like snowflakes. As they descended they acted as if they hadn't had a square meal for a month; they covered the corn, in fact, everything. The only citizens who seemed to meet them with a glad hand were the turkeys. Unlike the historic bird, he didn't have to sneak up behind, but like the enemy of the Light Brigade at Balaklava, the grasshoppers were on all sides. After the

pests had devoured everything that was green and palatable, they deposited their eggs in the soil and winged their flight to pastures new. The spring sun hatched out the eggs, and the newly born devoured the growing crops and took their departure as soon as their wings developed. There seemed to be nothing to destroy these pests. For several falls they made us a visit, then, possibly tiring of our society, left us never to return. As the plains to the west of us settled up, the breeding places of the locust were encroached upon and destroyed, and the grasshopper ceased to be a burden.

Those who have not lived on the prairie will not believe the stories of actual occurrences with the wind. It is one continual blow night and day from one year's end to the other. I started one day for market with a load of oats. It was my first experience transporting that article. The wind was blowing a gale, and as it struck the wagon it formed a whirl over the oats and they commenced to circle in the air. In spite of all that I could do they kept on circling, and by the time I arrived at the market not a peck of oats was left and I had seeded down the country. I was running my ranch at the time the insurance companies first inserted a clause in their policies against "straight winds." For two weeks, night and day, there came a wind from the southwest that caused my house to vibrate so we dared not sleep in it. During those two weeks we slept on the prairie. How trees ever grew in that country is beyond my comprehension!

The greatest dread of the inhabitant of the prairies is the cyclone. No one has any conception of a Western cyclone unless he has been on the ground, or, I might properly say, in the air. One of the worst that ever occurred in the West I saw, but, thank Heaven, did not feel. I was

in Mills County, Iowa, buying cattle. It was one of those awful hot, muggy days in July, when you could look for hailstorms, thunderstorms and cyclones.

Speaking of hailstorms, I attribute my early baldness to an experience I had with a hailstorm. The day the partic-

The Author's Wife and Her Indian Pony.

ular hailstorm I refer to occurred was about as hot as humanity could bear. I had gone on horseback to drive up some cattle. One of the dogs went along with me. I was in my shirt sleeves without any undershirt, and wore a straw hat, or what was left of it. I say what was left of it, as the

top of the hat was gone, leaving my ambrosial locks exposed to the rays of the sun. I was as good as bareheaded. You often hear of stories of hailstones being as large as hens' eggs and possibly doubted them, but if you will believe me, I have seen hailstones as large as eggs, and double-yolk eggs at that. I was on my way back with the herd, and as I came over the divide and started down a long hollow that led to the Pigeon I saw a hailstorm coming up the river. When I first saw it, it was about a quarter of a mile away and coming as fast as the wind. The stock could feel the chill and knew what was coming as well as I did, and all hands started on the jump down the hollow for the river, in order to get under the protection of the bank. Before any of us got half way to the river the storm was upon us. Hailstones commenced bouncing off the top of my head and welting me on the back. I jumped off the horse and tried to keep him between me and the storm, but in trying to hold him, we were going around and around in a kind of a "two-step," so to speak. There was nothing to do but let go of the horse and strike out for the river bank. I have heard of the Delaware whipping-post, and I can imagine how a fellow's back feels. My dog was at my heels, getting it with the rest; every little way he would lie down in the prairie grass and whine and then up and after me again. I would hold up my hands over my head and ward off the stones till I could stand it no longer, then my head would catch it again. There is one redeeming feature about hailstorms—they are of short duration. But that one lasted long enough to keep me company to the river bank. As I reached the bank over I went and crawled under the protection of an overhanging sod. The sun shone forth again; the cattle, one by one, came out of the river bottom; the horse had gone to the stable, but the

ever-faithful dog was at my side. The hair had partially protected my scalp, but my back looked like that of a small-pox patient. That hailstorm utterly destroyed one of my corn fields, consisting of one hundred acres.

I recall a little episode which occurred in an adjoining corn field a month later that laid low another portion of my corn crop. Among the other dogs on the place was a bulldog. A cattle ranch and bulldogs do not dove-tail very well, but as this particular dog was a pet of the female contingent his society was allowed. Like all bulldogs, this one was on the popular side of the monopoly question, for if he was ever called upon to help the other dogs out, where the herd was concerned, he would pick his animal and leave the balance of the herd to the rest of the dogs. So if any reader of this volume intends embarking in the cattle business and is a bulldog fancier, he will find it necessary to figure one bulldog with every head of stock. The little episode I refer to occurred on a certain occasion when the cattle broke into a corn field, not an uncommon occurrence on all well-regulated farms, and we started with a shepherd and a Newfoundland dog to drive them out. Without our knowledge the bulldog sneaked along. After the other dogs had quietly and successfully, or, at least, we thought they had, cleared the field, we heard an awful racket down at one end. Following the noise we found the bulldog and a three-year-old dancing the minuet while smashing down corn by the rod. The dog had the animal by the nose, and the steer was swinging him around like a professional club swinger. Before we got the dog's grip loose, between the men, horses, dogs and steer we destroyed more corn than the animal would have eaten in a month. The bulldog no doubt

thought he had performed a heroic act, and he never could quite understand, whenever thereafter the other dogs started after the stock, why he was left in his kennel to meditate.

In trying to describe a blizzard I mentioned the fact that Webster's and Worcester's dictionaries failed to supply the necessary words. If in addition to Messrs.

"Texas," Our Mainstay.

Webster and Worcester, Mrs. Webster and Mrs. Worcester and all the little Websters and Worcesters were to compile dictionaries, there would still be adjectives to coin to properly describe a Western cyclone. As already stated, the cyclone to which I particularly refer was in Mills County. While sitting on the piazza of a hotel we heard a low moan-

ing sound which one of the bystanders remarked was the forerunner of a cyclone. Off to the southwest black clouds commenced to loom above the horizon; higher and higher they arose and commenced to whirl in a circle. The moaning we had heard changed to a roar. The clouds became funnel-shaped, with a long narrow tail hanging toward the ground.

From the hotel steps we saw it bounding along the prairie, leaving a track a quarter of a mile wide swept as clean as a floor. The little whirlwind in the streets gives you the principle of the cyclone. Like it a cyclone forms a vacuum, lifting everything from the ground. The cyclone passed about a mile south of where I stood. After its passage the inhabitants of the adjoining country rushed to the aid of the stricken ones. Such a sight I never saw, nor ever listened to such experiences. Men, women and children were found dead, with every strip of clothing gone. Houses taken bodily from their foundations, torn into pieces and carried away for miles. Gullies full of dead animals and refuse, dead chickens without a feather, iron machinery twisted like a pretzel, ruin and desolation on all sides. A Mr. Osler's place, a gentleman from whom I had recently bought some stock, was in the track of the storm. His whole family lost their lives; he was saved. He told me that at one time he was at least two hundred feet in the air, and sailing along with him was a pet colt so close he could have put his hand on it. In one of Mr. Osler's corn-cribs there was over 5,000 bushels of corn; not a piece of the corn-crib nor an ear of the corn remained. The blacksmith of a village over which the storm passed was at work, and as the shop, which had a dirt floor, lifted and started heavenward, he caught hold of the anvil and

hung on and thereby saved his life. The Eastern farmer sometimes deplores his lot, but if he had seen what I saw that day he would conclude there was something worse to contend with than railroads, commission men, book agents, candidates and poor markets.

It was while I was battling with the elements on the Pigeon that the old settler had to admit that the record-breaking winter storm occurred. The storm and the intense cold of the 13th of January, 1888, will never be effaced from the memory of those who experienced it. Up to 3 P. M. the wind was in the Southwest, with no atmospheric warnings of what was to come. Suddenly the wind whirled to the Northwest, and that fine snow which is the forerunner of a blizzard came sifting along the frozen ground. The bulb in the thermometer began to sink, and with each passing moment the fury of the storm increased. For thirty-six hours it raged. Parents lost their lives endeavoring to reach the isolated school-houses where the children were marooned. Usually in storms the stock is the first consideration, but they were left to shift for themselves, consequently thousands perished. Forever after the dread of an approaching 13th of January to the Western stockman was like the guillotine to the condemned criminal.

CHAPTER IX.

UP AGAINST THE RED MAN.

In my career on the plains as a "cow puncher," as mayor of a frontier town, and as superintendent of a mine in the early days of Leadville, Colorado, I have occasionally been where I felt like shying my "caster into the ring"; but of all my experiences I never ached to go on "the war path" as I did when on the Niobrara River in Nebraska, years ago, I saw one of my best friends lying dead, scalped by a band of bloodthirsty Indians. Back in the seventies I was interested in a cattle ranch in that locality. The only railroad across the plains at the time was the Union Pacific. The nearest station of the railroad to our ranch was Ogallala. About fifty miles farther up the river from the ranch in which I was interested was that of the Moorehead boys, of Dunlap, Iowa. We often visited. Some of my stock had strayed away, and in hunting for them it took us in sight of the Moorehead corral. As we came on to the divide from where we always caught sight of the Moorehead ranch, we saw a cloud of smoke instead. As we approached the place we saw it was entirely consumed. About three hundred yards from the corral we came upon one of Moorehead's helpers lying on the ground shot dead and scalped. Near the corral lay the dead body of Frank Moorehead. We knew it was the work of Indians. It

Little Wolf's Double.

seemed that Little Wolf's band of Cheyenne Indians had broken away from their reservation in the Indian Territory and had left a track of blood and ashes through the States

of Kansas and Nebraska, and it was these devils who had done the work.

Possibly the novice is not aware of the fact that the scalp taken by the Indians is that part of the head where the hair makes a crown. Some have more than one crown. Moorehead must have had two, as he was scalped in two places. Over the grave of his dead brother Frank, Jim Moorehead took an oath of revenge. Whether he ever got revenge or not I do not know, but I do know that Little Wolf is dead. The Niobrara country in those days was an awful lonesome place. Our nearest town was Ogallala, one hundred and fifty miles away. There we had to go for our provisions and mail. Reports were made every two weeks to the owners of the cattle on the range which necessitated a ride of one hundred and fifty miles and back. I made the ride once and "once was enough for him." Loping seventy-five miles between daylight and twilight is quite a jaunt, but to get up the next morning and go another seventy-five, and then go back over the route in another two days is about all the average citizen can stand. There was a ranchman's corral just half way to Ogallala, where we stopped over night and changed horses. It was either to make the seventy-five miles to that corral in a day or camp out, and I never heard of any of the boys taking the camping-out end of the proposition. God help them if they did! Physicians tell us that there is nothing more beneficial than horseback riding, but they didn't mean three hundred miles in four days, with the chances of being chased by Indians.

The hardest ride I ever made in my fifteen years in the saddle was a forty-two-mile gallop from Six Mile Grove, in Iowa, to Council Bluffs, and made under a terrible nervous strain. The wife of my nearest neighbor, while

feeding a cane mill, caught her right arm in the machinery and crushed it above the elbow before they could stop the machine. I was present when the sickening accident occurred. Mounting the fleetest horse in my friend's stable, a mustang, I soon reached the divide along which led the old Mormon trail to Council Bluffs. This trail was the principal road traveled by the Mormons across Iowa on their exodus from Nauvoo, Illinois, to Salt Lake City. The horse seemed to realize what had occurred, and for the first twenty miles needed no urging, but on the last stretch I often applied the spurs and whip. As a guide to those who for years afterward followed the trail, the Mormons sowed sunflower seeds along it, and the Mormon trail ever after was marked by tall sunflowers. The wind would whirl them over the road, and I was constantly dodging them, and occasionally I would get a swipe, but I made the forty-two miles in two and three-quarter hours, but it was the last trip that horse ever made. The exertion was too much for him, and I left him in Council Bluffs to die. Fortunately, the doctor was at home, and fifteen minutes after my arrival we were going back over the trail with a span of horses that for fleetness would have been the envy of any horseman.

While I was attending a meeting of the Masonic lodge of which I was a member, at the little frontier town of Dunlap, Iowa, we were called to defend the town from a threatened attack from the Omaha tribe of Indians. The Indians had been camped for a couple of weeks by the Boyer River, about a mile from town. The chief was Yellow Smoke. He was a great gambler, and a successful one at that. He often visited the saloons of the town for a game of cards and to see what show there was to get his hands on some firewater. Yellow Smoke,

unfortunately, sat down one night in a game with some toughs, who purposely got him drunk to rob him. They stole his money and an elegant fur robe, and in the mêlée Yellow Smoke was killed. The toughs fled the town. As soon as the tribe heard of Yellow Smoke's death they came

The Original American.

for the body and demanded the men who killed him. The body they took away and buried, and sent word to the town authorities that they wanted the men who had killed their chief. There were four hundred bucks in the Indian camp, armed to the teeth, and as Dunlap had only about

five hundred inhabitants all told, things began to look a little dubious. The authorities sent back word, which was the truth, that the men who killed Yellow Smoke were not residents of the place and had fled from the town. The Indians wouldn't believe it, and demanded the men at once or they would come after them. We all knew what the result of that expedition would be. A committee, of which I was a member, from the lodge, visited the Indian camp to try and appease them, and assure them that the men had left. At the suggestion of one of the members, we dressed in our Masonic regalia. What a fortunate suggestion! To the astonishment of all of us, the Indians on our approach greeted us with Masonic signs, and assured us they would believe what we told them. Our statement proved satisfactory. The Indians having obtained Masonic signs in some unaccountable manner, undoubtedly saved Dunlap from being wiped off the map; that is, it looked that way. But there is one thing certain; from what I knew of the caliber of Dunlap citizens and the out-of-town members of the lodge who were present at that particular time, the Omaha tribe of Indians would have been somewhat reduced before the wiping-out process was completed.

In all my experience with the noble red man the most trying moment I ever passed through was when I sat at my desk in a grain house at Woodbine, Iowa, with my back to six stalwart Indians while closing a transaction with them in which from all appearances I was taking advantage of their ignorance. On my election to the mayoralty of Woodbine I bought a half interest in a grain business. About half of the time I spent at the office of the grain house. We had several government corn contracts to fill. Western Iowa at that time was one of the great corn belts

393361

of the West. The contracts necessitated the corn being shelled and sacked. The improved corn sheller with its necessary equipment was a little too rich for our bank account, so all the corn shelled at the warehouse was done by hand shellers. Two good men could shell and sack one hundred bushels a day. We paid five cents per bushel. For the benefit of the reader who never saw a hand corn sheller, I would state that it is a small iron contrivance which is put in motion by a person turning a crank and another feeding the machine one ear at a time, the corn coming out of one hole and the cobs another. Every once in a while the men would stop to sack the accumulated corn and clear away the cobs.

An island on the Boyer River about half a mile from Woodbine was a favorite Indian camping ground, and it was seldom that Indians were not in camp there. They daily visited the stores of the town to trade skins of animals they had trapped along the Boyer for grub and knick-knacks. The path from the island passed our warehouse. Nailed to the corner of the building was a sign, "Corn shellers wanted." On my arrival one morning at the office of the warehouse I saw six Indians running a corn sheller which my partner had put to work. One of our men was trying the hopeless task of instructing the noble red man the trick of running a corn sheller. It seems they had seen the sign "Corn shellers wanted" and had made application. I would give right now one hundred dollars if I had a photograph of those six Indians running that corn sheller, and I can assure the reader he would see it reproduced.

As I stated, one of our men was trying to show them how to run the machine, but he finally gave up the job. Instead of running two machines, the whole six were, I might say, standing around one. In feeding a hand corn sheller you

put one ear of corn in immediately after another, but in spite of my man's directions, the Indian who was feeding the machine would not put in another ear until he saw the cob of the preceding one come out. One Indian was handing corn to the fellow who was feeding, another turning the

Dinner Is Now Ready in the Dining Car.

crank, another picking up the lonely cob as it fell to the floor and carrying it over to the cob pile, another holding a sack and another with a broom and scoop shovel gathering up the kernels of corn as they came from the machine. The fellow who was turning the crank soon saw he had the

hardest job, so there was a continual argument going on as to whose turn it was next to turn the crank. After they had worked about four hours, they entered the office, greeting me with the word "backsheesh," which means, in English, money. I knew they were ready to quit and be paid off.

I sent one of the men to measure the corn, and he returned with the announcement that they had shelled the immense amount of two bushels, which at five cents a bushel came to ten cents. For the moment I didn't know what to do. With six Indians, all over six feet, standing at my back, who had worked hard according to their theory for nearly half a day, it required a lot of nerve on my part to hand them a lonely ten-cent piece. I never looked up as I handed one of them the coin. I expected to hear a war-whoop and feel my scalp leaving my head and several knives enter my anatomy. I could realize the feelings of the criminal in that horrible moment as he sits in the electric chair between the completion of the strapping and the turning on of the electric current. After firing a little Indian dialect at each other, they filed out of the office. As they crossed the threshold two gentlemen who had been sitting in the office and who were aware of what had taken place, burst into laughter. The Indians hearing the laughter stopped, and greatly to my relief, grimly smiled. The fact of the matter was my partner had put up a job on me and was in a nearby store playing "seven up" while watching developments at the warehouse.

CHAPTER X.

THE PLAINS AND THE ROCKIES.

In the schooldays of my boyhood I learned of the Great American Desert, but little did I think then that I would ever experience its discomforts. It required courage almost beyond the human frame to cover the trail to Denver and Santa Fé. Toiling along months at a time, urging slow-moving ox teams through the hot, blinding sandstorms by day and guarding your all from the Indians by night was enough to dethrone one's reason. I have seen strong men, who had endured many a hardship, crying like children at the trials around and before them. Nature, not satisfied with afflicting us with the real, would often mock us with the unreal. Man and beast perishing from thirst would see before them the mirage of some shady stream, seemingly a short distance away. The dumb brutes, ignorant of the deception, would bolt toward the phantom, often following it to their death. Beautiful cities would appear above the horizon as if to lure us on, then, like the hopes of this life, soon faded away. I have often heard of the sufferings of the soldiers on the plains, but their life was clover to that of the government trains, and still the hardships of the government trains, composed of men, was a mere bagatelle to that of the immigrants with their women and children. They were the unprotected ones who invited the attack of the Indians.

The United States Government and those who to-day are enjoying the benefits of the plains and the Rockies, owe a debt to the immigrants of the sixties which they can never repay. On those long, weary tugs from Omaha to Denver it was a great relief, at least to me, when the

Omaha.

Rockies came in sight. Notwithstanding when first seen they were over a hundred miles away, it was a satisfaction to know that your goal was stationary and always in view, and ere long your journey would be at an end, although at times, after days of travel, Pike's Peak and its companions seemed to be as far away as when first sighted.

There was nothing slow about building railroads over the plains; if they didn't build several miles between meals

they considered it poor progress. For hundreds of miles there were neither cuts nor fills. The surveyors would go ahead and stake out a strip the required width, furrows along each side of the stakes were plowed, ties would be laid between the furrowed strip, and rails spiked down, and the construction cars run thereon. At the time the Pacific Railroad bills were before Congress there were opponents to the bills, of course, as there is to everything. If a balloon came sailing over some communities, dropping twenty-dollar gold pieces, there are people who would try to shoot the aeronaut for his audacity. According to the *Congressional Globe,* the discussion over the Pacific Railroad bills showed what poor prophets we mortals be. Every speaker who opposed the bills dwelt long and earnestly on what the Indians would do. They claimed that on account of the Indians the road could not be built, unless under the protection of troops, and after the road was constructed the Indians would tear up the track unless it was guarded the whole length. What a godsend it is that there are people who cannot be persuaded by scarecrows. If not, America would still be a wilderness!

While the Pacific railroads were under construction the only thing the Indians did was to ride along the ridges at a safe distance, half scared to death in fear of the iron horse; and after the road was built these ferocious Indians, who were going to eat the road up, ties, rails and rolling stock, seeing the white man riding along in a cushioned seat smoking his cigar, commenced to make inquiries if they couldn't also ride. Instead of tearing up the track they became an infernal nuisance, pestering the government and railroad agents for free rides. There was hardly a train on the road without having one or two flat cars occupied by a lot of lazy, dirty Indians riding along at

the Government's expense. A certain train crew gave that practice its quietus. They started out of North Platte for Omaha with the usual Indian delegation. Riding on flat cars is ticklish business, as there is nothing to hold on to. The engineer said as he started out that you would find a string of Indians lying along the side of the track or he would ditch the train. He didn't ditch the train, but he did the Indians. While rounding curves he pulled the throttle wide open, and at every curve an Indian or two would roll off. The Indians were on their bellies, sliding over the car and yelling for dear life, but before the engineer let up he had dumped the whole bunch.

What a God-forsaken country was western Kansas and Nebraska prior to the eighties. We often hear the expression "land poor," but I never realized what it meant until I "bullwhacked" over the sandy desert from Omaha to Denver. They tell a story of a land transaction in western Nebraska which will give the reader an amusing illustration of "land poor." On the construction of the Union Pacific Railroad immigrants came pouring into Nebraska on the strength of the alluring literature issued by that company. If the "press agent" of the Union Pacific didn't get a good salary, he certainly deserved it. The fellow was lucky to escape with his life from disappointed immigrants. The land transaction I refer to was as follows: among others, a man from Illinois came to Nebraska with his family to locate on government land, but was unable to find any which suited him. He was referred to a man who was "land poor." The Sucker had no money he could spare, but he had an extra span of mules and offered them to the Nebraskan for two hundred acres, and the offer was accepted. The necessary papers in the transaction were drawn up. A few days afterward as the

immigrant was examining the papers he discovered that besides the two hundred acres, the "poor land" man had slipped in two hundred acres more.

How interesting it was to witness the birth and development of a railroad town on the frontier! The first intimation that a certain spot was to become a town on the railroad was when some business-looking individual came stalking down the line where the surveyors had driven their stakes far in advance of construction, and entered into negotiations with the owner of the desired tract for its purchase. There was never any difficulty closing the deal, as the owner was generally offered more money than he ever expected to see. The surveyors came next and staked out the future metropolis. As the sleepers and rails were laid along the grade a siding was run out. The next arrival was a box car, with a stovepipe sticking out of it, which was run onto the siding. That was the temporary depot and the home of the railroad agent. Talk about Tsars, Kings and high potentates generally, that agent was a combination of them all. His say was final; there was no appeal from him. He was the wonder of far and near. People used to come for miles to look at him. That blue cap with that gold band set the little country girls wild. The boys thought it an honor to be kicked out of the box car by him. If you wanted to ask him about anything, if you knew what was good for you, be far away or behind something.

The next adjunct to the new town were two more box cars, one furnished with bunks and the other a dining car. They were for the use of the men who were to build the depot and freight house. Now, my dear reader, for Heaven's sake don't think that when I say dining car I mean the palatial one of to-day, for, if you had seen the inside of that box car, and the cook, and what he cooked,

and the way he cooked it, a yoke of oxen could not have pulled you into that car for a meal, and if you had seen the bunks and graybacks in the other, when the time came to "Rock me to sleep, mother," you would have gone out on the prairie and lain down in the grass. As the first freight train arrived the rush was on. The agent was busy selling lots and the trainmen side-tracking carloads of lumber, and the enthusiastic citizens packing it on their backs to their respective locations. One enterprising citizen was putting up an eating shed, another a hotel, another a general store, another a grain and agricultural house, four or five more each building a saloon; in fact, nearly all lines of business were represented. Through the whole twenty-four hours saws and hammers were resounding over the prairie. The buildings were generally one-story affairs. Everybody was trying to get established first. It was all bustle, hurrah and get there. The next big gun to appear on the scene was a post office inspector. Everybody was glad when the government official arrived, not only because he came to establish a post office, but it was a satisfaction to know that a bigger dog than that railroad agent had come to town.

The greatest event that ever happened in the town was the arrival of the first woman. Men were invariably the first comers to a new Western town. The hotel man soon found it necessary to bring his family, and the date of their arrival was noised around among the boarders. Around the town the news spread like a prairie fire, and all agreed that such an event required some action. It was decided that the whole town should be at the depot and escort the mother and her two children—the landlord's family—to their home. A committee was appointed to make the necessary arrangements. The railroad agent was appointed chairman. They sent for a couple of fifes and

a drum and hired a farmer's team and wagon. The agent was appointed a committee of one to escort the lady from the train to the wagon. The agent also agreed to act as drum major and lead the procession. As the agent was the only one in town who had a decent suit of clothes, there was no objection to his conspicuousness.

The long-looked-for train arrived with its precious freight. The agent escorted the astonished mother to the wagon decked out in the flowers of the wild, the father following, with the two children and a big St. Bernard dog—the first dog in the town. The dog did not seem to relish the close proximity of the agent to his mistress, and tried to bite him. The dog's failure to reach the agent was a keen disappointment to the crowd. The procession started. First came the railroad agent with his blue suit, twirling a broom as a baton. Next came the drum corps, two fifes and a drum, then the wagon, the father and driver on the first seat, the mother and two children on the back seat, and the dog occupying the remaining space. Then came the citizens afoot, two abreast. The procession marched through the streets, the parents laughing, the children crying, the dog barking, and the crowd singing appropriate songs. At the hotel the crowd dispersed after giving three cheers for the happy parents, the children and the dog. The arrival of a woman and children in town changed the whole atmosphere of the place. The men were put on their good behavior, and with the arrival of other women and children and more dogs the skirmish line of civilization had struck the town.

The evening train of the next day brought an important adjunct to the community. As the train rolled in there alighted therefrom a "lean and hungry Cassius," tall and angular, with long hair and an unkempt appearance, and

an intelligent cast of countenance withal. He appropriated the first dry goods box he could lay his hands on and started for the public square. Mounting the box he doffed his hat, ran his hands through his flowing locks, wildly swung his arms and opened up with a thrilling voice. The gathering crowd soon learned that a "pusher of the quill" was among them. He announced that he was a newspaper man and that he would start a paper, furnishing the brains if the town would furnish the money. He spoke of the great advantage a newspaper was to a town. He was asked by one of the citizens the amount of money required to swing the thing, and the answer was $250. As the newcomer's arguments were convincing, the amount was raised then and there, and ere the Sun set on another Saturday night the *"Prairie Banner"* was unfurled o'er the uncertain sea of journalism, a sea whose coast line is strewn with many a wreck. The saying of Timothy Titcomb that "the law had undoubtedly spoilt many a good farmer"—which remark I take as a personal affront—might truthfully apply to other avocations.

Professional men came dropping into town, a school and church were erected, the town was incorporated and a Mayor and other officers elected, streets graded, sidewalks laid and trees set out. The one and a half story wooden buildings gave way to brick blocks, a public hall was erected, the place was booked as a one-night stand by the theatrical profession, a band was organized, secret societies installed, and the town that started from a box car and a stovepipe on a siding eventually grew to a flourishing municipality, giving an illustration of the grit and enterprise of the American race.

While I was holding down the chair of the chief executive office of the city of Woodbine, the great strike at Leadville, Colorado, had been made on Fryer's Hill, and I and one of the solid citizens of the town thought we would take a run out there and look the situation over. The Union Pacific Railroad had been built, and I found the trip from

Denver and the Ever Snow-capped Rockies.

Omaha to Denver somewhat different than I did years before, when I was associated with Mr. Bosler, a government contractor. There is a big difference between cross-

ing the hot sands of the desert in a railroad train and following a slow-moving ox team, and at night a berth in a sleeping-car is much more preferable to lying under a wagon with a gun as a bedfellow, with one eye open trying to figure out whether that object you thought you saw was simply the waving of the grass or some sneaking Indian. I thought I had seen a frontier town when I struck Boone. But Boone was not in the same class with Leadville.

What a restless race is the American! In my life on the plains I saw railroads projected and built to isolated places over dreary wastes, yet the cars were crowded with Americans, many of whom for the life of them couldn't tell where they were going or what for. If they would build a railroad to the infernal regions, the cars would no doubt be full of Americans, taking their chances on "beating the devil around the bush."

The Denver and Rio Grande Railroad had reached Leadville, and on the morning of the third day we arrived. Leadville is situated on what was once known as California Gulch, one of the richest placer mining deposits in the world. Little did the old miners know as they washed the gold from the sand in California Gulch that the hills which looked down upon them contained as rich ore as the Rockies possessed. They tell the story, and seem willing to swear to it, how the rich mineral deposits of Leadville were unearthed. Miners are constantly being grub-staked to seek new discoveries. A poor miner by the name of Fryer and a companion were grub-staked and started off from California Gulch for the Mosquito Range. Among other things they took along was a jug of whiskey. They had gone but a short distance when they concluded they would stop and sample the whiskey to see if it was worth carrying. The result was they never left the spot until

the whiskey was consumed. The whiskey gone, they couldn't see any object in going farther, so they proposed to dig a hole in Mother Earth right then and there, with the result that they exposed the carbonates that made

Fryer's Hill in the Long Ago.

Fryer's Hill at Leadville known the world over as one of the richest mining strikes.

While we were in Leadville we attended a political meeting and saw a candidate swing a crowd by a trick I never saw before nor expect to see again. The miners' vote was all-important, and as the Leadville district went, so went the

State. The opposing candidate had been there a fortnight before and it seemed to be the opinion that he had corraled the mining vote. It was reported that the candidate who I heard, said, as he left Denver, that he had a sure scheme to win the miners' vote if he were given the opportunity to work it, and it seemed he had, but no one would have believed it a winner if he had known what it was beforehand. The miners never did take much stock in politics, so the candidate's reception was rather a chilly one. The fellow stood six feet in his stockings and was built in proportion; was a good speaker, told some funny stories, and altogether made a very convincing speech. But one could see that the miners were not over-enthusiastic. After he finished he asked if anybody wanted to ask any questions. Some "butter-in," fresh from the East, arose to ask a question, and the candidate requested him to come on to the platform. The fellow obeyed and propounded a simple question. The words had no sooner left his mouth than the candidate, who had walked over to where he was, hit the fellow a blow in the face, knocking him head over heels off the platform. We all looked on in utter amazement. There was a dead silence, broken by the candidate walking to the foot-lights and smilingly inquiring if there was anybody else who wished to ask any questions. In a moment the miners were on their feet, cheering like mad and yelling at the top of their voices: "You are the kind of a man we want." They rushed on to the platform, boosted the fellow on to their shoulders and paraded all over town with him. He won the miners' vote.

A daily sight and a very amusing one was the arrival and departure of the jack trains to and from the mines on the mountains. They brought ore down, and everything used in the mines above they packed back. The loads

they carried up the mountainside were simply astonishing. They were very small animals and seemingly docile. They had no harness on them of any kind, except a wooden piece, like a saw-buck, girded to their backs. To the saw-

The Little Pittsburg in the Good Old Days.

bucks the loads were attached. A train consisting of seventeen jacks was loaded one day in front of the hotel where I was stopping; two were loaded each with a barrel of kerosene and the others with 16-foot planks. The kerosene barrels were tied on the saw-bucks and were as large as the jack. A plank was fastened on each side of the

jacks, extending four feet in front and about six behind. We watched them with a glass as they held to the mountain trail. A jack train is absolutely necessary to the mines on the steep isolated mountains. All the jacks ask in return is a place to roll over and permission to emit an occasional bray. Not much recompense for their services! There is no more faithful animal to man than the horse species, yet how cruelly they are often treated. There is no more philanthropic work than to aid and assist those societies in the great cities which have for their aim the protection of those toiling dumb brutes, who cannot express their wants, and who one often sees fall by the wayside through the cruelty and neglect of their masters.

CHAPTER XI.

THE PASSING OF THE STOCKMAN.

BECOMING tired of music and profanity, we gladly accepted the invitation of an old stockman we happened to meet to visit his ranch in Wyoming for a hunt among the foothills for caribou. How good it seemed to be in the woods again and away from that money-crazy crowd at California Gulch. Will the time ever come when there will be some other aim in life than hunting gold? It is an honest endeavor in the daylight fair to extract the raw material from Mother Earth, but often through ways which are dark do we extract the finished product from our fellow man. I was glad that my friend offered me the opportunity to hunt for something else than veins and fissures and hear something else than "a mill run" and so many "ounces to the ton." I was glad to get away from trying to solve the crooks and turns of the two-legged animal, and study the habits of the four-legged one.

In the preceding chapters the author has endeavored to so relate his experiences on the frontier that the reader would find something in this book of a pleasant nature, but the life he led and its culmination was more of a tragedy than a comedy. While blazing the way, the many ordeals through which I struggled and the sacrifices I was compelled to make better fitted me for the life that fol-

lowed, and I attribute my success when I again returned to the Empire State to my experience on the plains. In order to fully appreciate the comforts of this existence, one should have experienced the life of the frontier. No one is competent to decide what is best for mankind without having first communed with Nature. Many of the great men of ancient times and those Presidents of our country to whom we look as examples, lived in the open.

It was a sorry day for me, while I was a stockman, that I wrote an article and had it published stating the truth concerning the beef combination. I regretted more than once that I wrote the article, but who is there that hasn't written something he regrets? The only man I ever heard of who had no regrets for what he had ever written lived in New Hampshire. He happened to make the remark that he had never written anything he regretted. They immediately proposed to run him for governor, but upon investigation they ascertained that he couldn't write.

I was a marked man from the time I wrote that article. To my surprise, the railroads took up the cudgel on behalf of the Beef Trust; while other shippers had no difficulty getting cars to ship their stock in, I always seemed to have trouble. They received rebates, while I got what the historical little pig did who neither went to market, stayed at home, had the choice of the menu card, nor tweaked at the barn door. If Charles K. Skinner, the agent of the Northwestern at that time at Woodbine, Iowa, or John B. Anderson, the agent of the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul at Portsmouth, both good friends of mine, are alive, they could tell of many orders they received concerning me, that they found a way not to execute. After I got started with my stock I was often hampered along the line. I was once sidetracked for four hours at Cedar Rapids on the Northwest-

ern in a sleet storm under the pretense that there was something broken on one of my cars, but the yardmaster, with whom I was well acquainted, told me there was nothing the matter. On my arrival in Chicago I was fortunate enough to find President Keep at the company's office, and

My Last Bunch of Stock.

I appealed to him, and, as a New Yorker, he promised me he would look into my case. As the same bill of fare continued to be handed to me, I infer all I got was a "look-in."

Before I threw up the sponge, however, I got one shot at the crowd by being instrumental in sending an attaché of the Union Stock Yards to Joliet, and stopping, at least

temporarily, a practice which was simply murder. A disease that is always prevalent among swine, and which has lost millions of dollars to the stock feeder, is known as hog cholera. Whole droves have been swept away by that dreaded disease. Carloads of infected hogs have been shipped to the Union Stock Yards, Chicago, through the ignorance of farmers and carelessness of shippers, and are now, for aught I know. I have seen cars of hogs start from western Iowa with pronounced cases of cholera, with hogs dying all the way in, and on their arrival at Chicago, the dead were sold to local butchers to be tried into lard, and those able to walk over the scales into the great packing-houses were converted into "sugar-cured hams" and pickled pork. Every shipper of swine product knows the truth of what I state, and every inspector in the yards and packer knows that diseased meat has been handed out to the consumer.

I would much prefer to draw the veil over man's inhumanity to man, but I consider the duty I owe as an American to relate my experiences. Picture to yourself the home of the cattle raiser on the great prairies of the West, who, with his little family, is battling, like all of us, for an existence. I can tell the story no better than to follow the little calf who first saw the light of day on a storm-swept prairie, until he, as a three-year-old, fattened for the market, entered one of the great abattoirs in the city on the shore of Lake Michigan. The first six months of its life it ran by its mother's side. The following spring it entered the one-year-old grade, and roughed it, summer and winter, until it became a two-year-old past, and entered the feed-yard to be fattened, a corn-fed steer for the market. During those long years corn was planted and gath-

ered by willing hands in the hope that in the end the reward would come, but, alas, what a sacrifice!

I was a shipper of live stock to Chicago before, during and after the formation of the Beef Trust. Prior to its

Union Stock Yards, Chicago.

formation, buyers from Pittsburg, Buffalo, Philadelphia and New York were in the yards bidding for our stock, and the prices we obtained gave us some reward for our labor. I will long remember the morning when I arrived at the yards with a consignment of stock and was informed by my commissioner, Harley Green, that the day of a profit to

the stockman was at an end. He informed me of the forming of the Beef Trust and that competition was no more. An arbitrary price succeeded "supply and demand." The combination fixed the price. They knew what it cost to fatten a steer, and the bid was just enough to encourage you to go back and make another try. If you didn't like the price of the day, you had the privilege of paying yardage—a rather expensive undertaking.

If you thought you were being robbed, which you were, you could reload and ship farther East, but you would run against the same combination with virtually the same bid. There was nothing for you to do but to stand and deliver, and return to your family and try to comfort those who had toiled with you for three long years to convert that little calf into a fattened steer, and tell the same sad story that other stockmen carried to their isolated homes.

The Beef Trust was not satisfied with controlling the purchasing end, but after the stock was slaughtered and passed through the packing-houses, it was shipped to the cold-storage houses of the East, and put on the block with an arbitrary price to the consumer. That was the condition then, and through the non-action of the law-enforcing power it prevails to-day. An individual or corporation who controls the price at both the purchasing and distributing end of a product exacts all the profit—it is simply a question of how much do you want ere you quit, and human nature's wants are never satisfied. The greed of that great combination deprived the little children of the stock raiser of education and the necessaries of life—their mothers, through toil and deprivation, were driven to the asylum, and their fathers to their graves with broken hearts, and as I, who they drove out

of business, see the offspring of the Armours, Morrises and their kind, and the beneficiaries of like combinations, flaunting their predatory wealth, it is easy for me to understand why there is unrest throughout the domain of this great Republic.

As I look back to the herds of cattle and other stock I once owned, and the little colts I petted and who wore their lives away in my behalf, as I cast my eye over the plains where so many friendships were formed, a feeling of sadness comes over me. For I realize that they and those pleasant associations are gone forever. When I remember the live stock that I was instrumental in bringing into this world, who knew no other home than mine, and who looked to me for protection, but whom I loaded into cars to be shipped to their death, I feel as if I had committed an unpardonable sin, and as I know that those animals gave up everything, even their lives, for my profit, I cannot help but think, what good have I done in this world to atone for such a sacrifice?

THE END.

The first literary effort by G. Smith Stanton,

Where the Sportsman Loves to Linger,

was pronounced by many of its readers to be one of the most interesting of little volumes. Chief Justice Fuller, of the United States Supreme Court, wrote Mr. Stanton that it was "the most excellent and vivid brochure" he had ever read. The book describes the three most popular canoe trips in the State of Maine —the Allagash, and the East and West Branches of the Penobscot. The author tells most entertainingly of his hunting and fishing experience, and also gives plenty of information and advice useful to the reader, as he takes him from New York City by the Maine Steamship Company Line to Portland, thence through the Maine woods, and brings him back to the city by the Fall River Line. The story is one of actual experiences, and the author was fortunate to have as his companion Dr. Hazelton, of Bangor, one of the best amateur camera artists in the country, and the book contains eighty half-tone pictures of the scenery and the wild animals of the Maine woods.

The book is printed on specially made wood-cut paper, from large type, contains one hundred and twenty-five pages, fully illustrated, and is bound in attractive cloth binding, with printed inset on the front cover. Price, one dollar, net.

It can be secured at all bookstores, or it will be sent by mail upon receipt of price, $1.00, and 8 cents additional for postage. Address all orders to

J. S. OGILVIE PUBLISHING COMPANY,

BOX 767. **57 ROSE STREET, NEW YORK.**